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THE

WORKS

OF

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CHARITY

MAINTAINED BY CATHOLICS.

PART I.

CHAP. IV.

To say that the Creed contains all points necessarily to be believed, is neither pertinent to the question in hand; nor in itself true.

"I SAY, neither pertinent nor true. Not pertinent; because our question is not what points are necessary to be explicitly believed; but what points may be lawfully disbelieved, or rejected after sufficient proposition that they are Divine truths. You say, the Creed contains all points necessary to be believed: be it so; but doth it likewise contain all points not to be disbelieved? Certainly it doth not. For how many truths are there in Holy Scripture not contained in the Creed, which we are not obliged distinctly and particularly to know and believe, but are bound under pain of damnation not to reject, as soon as we come to know that they are found in Holy Scripture; and we having already shewed that whatsoever is proposed by God's church as a point of faith, is infallibly a truth revealed by God; it followeth, that whosoever denieth any such point,

opposeth God's sacred testimony, whether that point be contained in the Creed or no. In vain then was your care employed to prove, that all points of faith necessary to be explicitly believed, are contained in the Creed. Neither was that the catalogue which Charity Mistaken demanded. His demand was (and it was most reasonable) that you would once give us a list of all fundamentals, the denial whereof destroys salvation; whereas the denial of other points not fundamental may stand with salvation, although both these kinds of points be equally proposed as revealed by God. For if they be not equally proposed, the difference will arise from diversity of the proposal, and not of the matter fundamental, or not fundamental. This catalogue only can shew how far protestants may disagree without breach of unity in faith; and upon this many other matters depend according to the ground of protestants. But you will never adventure to publish such a catalogue. I say more; you cannot assign any one point so great, or fundamental, that the denial thereof will make a man a heretic, if it be not sufficiently propounded as a Divine truth. Nor can you assign any one point so small, that it can without heresy be rejected, if once it be sufficiently represented as revealed by God.

2. "Nay, this your instance in the Creed is not only impertinent, but directly against you. For all points in the Creed are not of their own nature fundamental, as I shewed* before; and yet it is damnable to deny any one point contained in the Creed. So that it is clear, that to make an error

* Cap. iii. n. 3.

damnable, it is not necessary that the matter be of itself fundamental.

3. "Moreover, you cannot ground any certainty upon the Creed itself, unless first you presuppose that the authority of the church is universally infallible, and consequently that it is damnable to oppose her declarations, whether they concern matters great or small, contained or not contained in the Creed. This is clear; because we must receive the Creed itself upon the credit of the church, without which we could not know that there was any such thing as that which we call the Apostles' Creed. And yet the arguments whereby you endeavour to prove, that the Creed contains all fundamental points, are grounded upon supposition, that the Creed was made either by the apostles themselves, or by the church* of their times from them: which thing we could not certainly know, if the succeeding and still continued church may err in her traditions; neither can we be assured, whether all fundamental articles which you say were, out of the Scriptures, summed and contracted into the Apostles' Creed, were faithfully summed, and contracted, and not one pretermitted, altered or mistaken, unless we undoubtedly know that the apostles composed the Creed; and that they intended to contract all fundamental points of faith into it; or at least that the church of their times (for it seemeth you doubt whether indeed it were composed by the apostles themselves) did understand the apostles aright; and that the church of their times did intend that the Creed should contain all fundamental points.

* Page 216.

For if the church may err in points not fundamental, may she not also err in the particulars which I have specified? Can you shew it to be a fundamental point of faith, that the apostles intended to comprise all points of faith necessary to salvation in the Creed? Yourself say no more than that it is very* probable; which is far from reaching to a fundamental point of faith. Your probability is grounded upon the judgment of antiquity, and even of the Roman doctors, as you say in the same place. But if the catholic church may err, what certainty can you expect from antiquity or doctors? Scripture is your total rule of faith. Cite therefore some text of Scripture, to prove that the apostles, or the church of their times, composed the Creed, and composed it with a purpose that it should contain all fundamental points of faith: which being impossible to be done, you must for the Creed itself rely upon the infallibility of the church.

4. "Moreover, the Creed consisteth not so much in the words, as in their sense and meaning. All such as pretend to the name of Christians, recite the Creed, and yet many have erred fundamentally, as well against the articles of the Creed, as other points of faith. It is then very frivolous to say, the Creed contains all fundamental points; without specifying, both in what sense the articles of the Creed be true, and also in what true sense they be fundamental. For, both these tasks you are to perform, who teach that all truth is not fundamental: and you do but delude the ignorant when you say, that the Creed, taken in a catholic†

* Page 241. † Page 216.

sense, comprehendeth all points fundamental; because with you, all catholic sense is not fundamental; for so it were necessary to salvation that all Christians should know the whole Scripture, wherein every least point hath a catholic sense. Or if, by catholic sense, you understand that sense which is so universally to be known and believed by all, that whosoever fails therein cannot be saved, you trifle, and say no more than this—all points of the Creed, in a sense necessary to salvation, are necessary to salvation: or, all points fundamental are fundamental.—After this manner it were an easy thing to make many true prognostications, by saying it will certainly rain when it raineth. You say the Creed* was opened and explained in some parts in the Creeds of Nice, &c. But how shall we understand the other parts, not explained in those Creeds?

5. "For what article in the Creed is more fundamental, or may seem more clear, than that wherein we believe Jesus Christ to be the Mediator, Redeemer, and Saviour of mankind, and the founder and foundation of a catholic church, expressed in the Creed? And yet about this article, how many different doctrines are there, not only of old heretics, as Arius, Nestorius, Eutiches, &c. but also of protestants, partly against catholics, and partly against one another? For the said main article of Christ's being the only Saviour of the world, &c. according to different senses of disagreeing sects, doth involve these and many other such questions: that faith in Jesus Christ doth justify alone; that sacraments have no efficiency

* Page 216.

in justification; that baptism doth not avail infants for salvation, unless they have an act of faith; that there is no sacerdotal absolution from sins; that good works proceeding from God's grace are not meritorious; that there can be no satisfaction for the temporal punishment due to sin, after the guilt or offence is pardoned; no purgatory; no prayers for the dead; no sacrifice of the mass; no invocation; no mediation or intercession of saints; no inherent justice; no supreme pastor; yea, no bishop by Divine ordinance; no real presence; no transubstantiation, with divers others. —And why? because (forsooth) these doctrines derogate from the titles of Mediator, Redeemer, Advocate, Foundation, &c. Yea, and are against the truth of our Saviour's human nature, if we believe divers protestants writing against transubstantiation. Let then any judicious man consider, whether Dr. Potter, or others, do really satisfy, when they send men to the Creed for a perfect catalogue, to distinguish points fundamental, from those which they say are not fundamental. If he will speak indeed to some purpose, let him say, this article is understood in this sense, and in this sense it is fundamental—that other is to be understood in such a meaning; yet according to that meaning it is not so fundamental, but that men may disagree, and deny it without damnation. But it were no policy for any protestant to deal so plainly.

6. "But to what end should we use many arguments? Even yourself are forced to limit your own doctrine, and come to say, that the Creed is a perfect catalogue of fundamental points, taken as it was further opened and explained in some

parts (by occasion of emergent heresies) in the other catholic creeds of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus* Chalcedon, and Athanasius. But this explication, or restriction, overthroweth your assertion. For as the Apostles' Creed was not to us a sufficient catalogue, till it was explained by the first council, nor then till it was declared by another, &c. so now, also, as new heresies may arise, it will need particular explanation against such emergent errors; and so it is not yet, nor ever will be, of itself alone, a particular catalogue, sufficient to distinguish betwixt fundamental and not fundamental points.

7. "I come to the second part—That the Creed doth not contain all main and principal points of faith: and to the end we may not strive about things either granted by us both, or nothing concerning the point in question, I must premise these observations:

8. "First, That it cannot be denied, but that the Creed is most full and complete, to that purpose for which the holy apostles, inspired by God, meant that it should serve, and in that manner as they did intend it; which was, not to comprehend all particular points of faith, but such general heads as were most befitting and requisite for preaching the faith of Christ to Jews and Gentiles, and might be briefly and compendiously set down, and easily learned and remembered. And therefore, in respect of gentiles, the Creed doth mention God as creator of all things; and for both Jews and Gentiles, the Trinity, the Messias and Saviour, his birth, life, death, resurrection, and

* Page 216.

glory, from whom they were to hope remission of sins, and life everlasting, and by whose sacred name they were to be distinguished from all other professions, by being called Christians: according to which purpose St. Thomas of Aquine* doth distinguish all the articles of the Creed into these general heads: that some belong to the majesty of the Godhead, others to the mystery of our Saviour Christ's human nature: which two general objects of faith the Holy Ghost doth express and conjoin, John xvii. *Hæc est vita æterna*, &c. "This is life everlasting, that they know thee, the true God, and whom thou hast sent, Jesus Christ." But it was not their meaning to give us, as it were, a course of divinity, or a catechism, or a particular expression of all points of faith, leaving those things to be performed as occasion should require, by their own word or writing, for their time, and afterwards by their successors in the catholic church. Our question then is not, whether the Creed be perfect, as far as the end for which it was composed did require; for we believe and are ready to give our lives for this; but only we deny, that the apostles did intend to comprise therein all particular points of belief, necessary to salvation, as even by Dr. Potter's own confession,† it doth not comprehend *agenda*, or things belonging to practice; as sacraments, commandments, the acts of hope, and duties of charity, which we are obliged not only to practise, but also to believe by Divine infallible faith. Will he therefore infer that the Creed is not perfect, because it contains not all those necessary and fundamental objects of

* 2, 2. q. 1. Art. 8. † Page 235. 215.

faith? He will answer, No, because the apostles intended only to express *credenda*, things not to be believed, not practised. Let him therefore give us leave to say, that the Creed is perfect, because it wanteth none of those objects of belief which were intended to be set down, as we explicated before.

9. "The second observation is, that to satisfy our question what points in particular be fundamental, it will not be sufficient to allege the Creed unless it contains all such points, either expressly and immediately; or else in such manner, that by evident and necessary consequence they may be deduced from articles both clearly and particularly contained therein. For if the deduction be doubtful, we shall not be sure, that such conclusions be fundamental; or if the articles themselves, which are said to be fundamental, be not distinctly and particularly expressed, they will not serve us to know and distinguish all points fundamental, from those which they call not fundamental. We do not deny but that all points of faith, both fundamental and not fundamental, may be said to be contained in the Creed, in some sense; as for example, implicitly, generally, or in some such involved manner. For when we explicitly believe the catholic church, we do implicitly believe whatsoever she proposeth as belonging to faith; or else by way of reduction, that is, when we are once instructed in the belief of particular points of faith, not expressed, nor by necessary consequence deducible from the Creed; we may afterwards by some analogy, or proportion, and resemblance, reduce it to one or more of those articles, which are explicitly contained in the symbol.

Thus St. Thomas, the cherubim among divines, teacheth* that the miraculous existence of our blessed Saviour's body in the eucharist, as likewise all his other miracles, are reduced to God's omnipotency, expressed in the Creed. And Dr. Potter saith, 'The eucharist† being a seal of that holy union which we have with Christ our Head by his Spirit and faith, and with the saints his members by charity, is evidently included in the communion of saints.' But this reductive way is far from being sufficient to infer out of the articles of God's omnipotency, or of the communion of saints, that our Saviour's body is in the eucharist, and much less whether it be only in figure, or else in reality; by transubstantiation or consubstantiation, &c. and least of all, whether or no these points be fundamental. And you hyperbolize in saying, the eucharist is evidently included in the communion of saints, as if there could not have been, or was not, a communion of saints before the blessed sacrament was instituted. Yet it is true, that after we know and believe there is such a sacrament, we may refer it to some of those heads expressed in the Creed, and yet so, as St. Thomas refers it to one article, and Dr. Potter to another; and in respect of different analogies or effects, it may be referred to several articles. The like I say of other points of faith, which may in some sort be reduced to the Creed, but nothing to Dr. Potter's purpose; but contrarily it sheweth that your affirming such and such points to be fundamental or not fundamental, is merely arbitrary to serve your turn, as necessity and your occa-

* 2. 2. q. 1. Art. 8. ad. 6. † Page 231.

sions may require. Which was an old custom amongst heretics, as we read in *St. Augustine, Pelagius, and Cœlestius, 'desiring fraudulently to avoid the hateful name of heresies, affirmed that the question of original sin may be disputed without danger of faith.' But this holy father affirms that it belongs to the foundation of faith. 'We may (saith he) endure a disputant who errs in other questions not yet diligently examined, not yet diligently established by the whole authority of the church; their error may be borne with; but it must not pass so far as to attempt to shake the foundation of the church.' We see St. Augustine placeth the being of a point fundamental or not fundamental, in that it hath been examined and established by the church, although the points of which he speaketh, namely, original sin, be not contained in the Creed.

10. " Out of that which hath been said, I infer, that Dr. Potter's pains in alleging catholic doctors, the ancient fathers, and the council of Trent, to prove that the Creed contains all points of faith, was needless; since we grant it in manner aforesaid. But Dr. Potter cannot in his conscience believe, that catholic divines, or the council of Trent, and the holy fathers did intend, that all points in particular which we are obliged to believe, are contained explicitly in the Creed; he knowing well enough, that all catholics hold themselves obliged to believe all those points, which the said council defines to be believed under an anathema, and that all Christians believe the

* De peccat. Orig. cont. Pelag. l. ii. c. 22.

commandments, sacraments, &c. which are not expressed in the Creed.

11. " Neither must this seem strange. For who is ignorant, that summaries, epitomes, and the like brief abstracts, are not intended to specify all particulars of that science or subject, to which they belong. For as the Creed is said to contain all points of faith; so the decalogue comprehends all articles (as I may term them) which concern charity and good life; and yet this cannot be so understood, as if we were disobliged from performance of any duty, or the eschewing of any vice, unless it be expressed in the ten commandments. For, (to omit the precepts of receiving sacraments, which belong to practice or manners, and yet are not contained in the decalogue) there are many sins, even against the law of nature, and light of reason, which are not contained in the ten commandments, except only by similitude, analogy, reduction, or some such way. For example, we find not expressed in the decalogue, either divers sins, as gluttony, drunkenness, pride, sloth, covetousness in desiring either things superfluous, or with too much greediness; or divers of our chief obligations, as obedience to princes, and all superiors, not only ecclesiastical, but also civil; whose laws Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, and some other protestants do dangerously affirm not to oblige in conscience, and yet these men think they know the ten commandments; as likewise divers protestants defend usury to be lawful, and the many treatises of civilians, canonists, and casuists are witnesses, that divers sins against the light of reason, and law of nature, are not dis-

tinctly expressed in the ten commandments; although when by other diligence they are found to be unlawful, they may be reduced to some of the commandments, and yet not so evidently and particularly but that divers do it divers manners.

12. " My third observation is, that our present question being, whether or no the Creed contains so fully all fundamental points of faith, that whosoever do not agree in all and every one of those fundamental articles, cannot have the same substance of faith, nor hope of salvation; if I can produce one or more points, not contained in the Creed, in which if two do not agree, both of them cannot expect to be saved, I shall have performed as much as I intend; and Dr. Potter must seek out some other catalogue for points fundamental than the Creed. Neither is it material to the said purpose, whether such fundamental points rest only in knowledge, and speculation, or belief; or else be farther referred to work and practice. For the habit, or virtue of faith, which inclineth and enableth us to believe both speculative and practical verities, is of one and the self-same nature and essence. For example, by the same faith, whereby I speculatively believe there is a God, I likewise believe, that he is to be adored, served, and loved; which belong to practice. The reason is, because the formal object or motive, for which I yield assent to those different sorts of material objects, is the same in both, to wit, the revelation or word of God. Where, by the way, I note, that if the unity or distinction and nature of faith were to be taken from the diversity of things revealed, by one faith I should believe speculative verities, and by another such as tend to practice,

which I doubt whether Dr. Potter himself will admit.

13. "Hence it followeth, that whosoever denieth any one main practical revealed truth, is no less a heretic, than if he should deny a point resting in belief alone. So that when Dr. Potter (to avoid our argument, that all fundamental points are not contained in the Creed, because in it there is no mention of the sacraments, which yet are points of so main importance, that protestants make the due administration of them to be necessary and essential to constitute a church) answereth, that the sacraments are to be * reckoned rather among the *agenda* of the church, than the *credenda;* they are rather Divine rites and ceremonies, than doctrines; he either grants that we affirm, or in effect says, of two kinds of revealed truths which are necessary to be believed, the Creed contains one sort only; *ergo*, it contains all kinds of revealed truths necessary to be believed. Our question is not *de nomine*, but *re*, not what be called points of faith, or of practice, but what points indeed be necessarily to be believed, whether they be termed *agenda* or *credenda;* especially the chiefest part of Christian perfection, consisting more in action than in barren speculation; in good works, than bare belief; in doing, than knowing. And there are no less contentions concerning practical, than speculative, truths; as sacraments, obtaining remission of sin, invocation of saints, prayers for the dead, adoration of Christ in the sacrament, and many other; all which do so much the more import, as on them, beside

* Page 235.

right belief, doth also depend our practice, and the ordering of our life. Though Dr. Potter could therefore give us (as he will never be able to do) a minute and exact catalogue of all truths to be believed; that would not make me able enough to know whether or no I have faith sufficient for salvation, till he also did bring in a particular list of all believed truths, which tend to practice, declaring which of them be fundamental, which not; that so every man might know, whether he be not in some damnable error, for some article of faith, which farther might give influence into damnable works.

14. "These observations being premised, I come to prove, that the Creed doth not contain all points of faith necessary to be known and believed. And, to omit that in general it doth not tell us what points be fundamental or not fundamental, which, in the way of protestants, is most necessary to be known; in particular, there is no mention of the greatest evils from which man's calamity proceeded; I mean, the sin of the angels, of Adam, and of original sin in us; nor of the greatest good, from which we expect all good, to wit, the necessity of grace for all works tending to piety. Nay, there is no mention of angels, good or bad. The meaning of that most general head (*Oportet accedentem*, &c. 'It behoves * him that comes to God, to believe that he is, and is a remunerator') is questioned by the denial of merit, which makes God a giver, but not a rewarder. It is not expressed whether the article of remission of sins be understood by faith alone, or else may admit the efficiency of sacraments. There

* Heb. xi. 6.

is no mention of ecclesiastical, apostolical, Divine traditions, one way or other; or of Holy Scriptures in general, and much less of every book in particular; nor of the name, nature, number, effects, matter, form, ministry, intention, necessity of sacraments; and yet the due administration of the sacraments, is with protestants an essential note of the church. There is nothing for baptism of children, nor against rebaptization. There is no mention in favour or against the sacrifice of the mass, of power in the church to institute rites, holy days, &c. and to inflict excommunication, or other censures; of priesthood, bishops, and the whole ecclesiastical hierarchy, which are very fundamental points; of St. Peter's primacy, which to Calvin seemeth a fundamental error; nor of the possibility or impossibility to keep God's commandments; of the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and Son; of purgatory, or prayer for the dead, in any sense. And yet Dr. Potter doth not deny, but that Arius was esteemed a heretic, for denying * all sort of commemoration from the dead. Nothing of the church's visibility or invisibility, fallibility or infallibility, nor of other points controverted betwixt protestants themselves, and between protestants and catholics, which to Dr. Potter seem so heinous corruptions, that they cannot without damnation join with us in profession thereof. There is no mention of the cessation of the old law, which yet is a very main point of faith. And many other might be also added.

15. " But what need we labour to specify par-

* Page 35.

ticulars? There are many important points of faith not expressed in the Creed, as, since the world's beginning now, and for all future times there have been, are, and may be, innumerable gross damnable heresies, whose contrary truths are not contained in the Creed. For every fundamental error must have a contrary fundamental truth; because of two contradictory propositions in the same degree, if the one is false, the other must be true. As for example, if it be a damnable error to deny the blessed Trinity, or the Godhead of our Saviour, the belief of them must be a truth necessary to salvation; or rather, if we will speak properly, the error is damnable, because the opposite truth is necessary; as death is frightful, because *life is sweet*; and, according to philosophy, the privation is measured by the form to which it is repugnant. If therefore the Creed contain in particular all fundamental points of faith, it must explicitly, or by clear consequence, comprehend all truths opposite to innumerable heresies of all ages past, present, and to come, which no man in his wits will affirm it to do.

16. "And here I cannot omit to signify how you * applaud the saying of Dr. Usher, 'That in those propositions, which without all controversy are universally received in the whole Christian world, so much truth is contained, as being joined with holy obedience, may be sufficient to bring a man to everlasting salvation; neither have we cause to doubt, but that—as many as walk according to this rule (neither overthrowing that which they have builded, by superinducing any damnable heresies

* Page 255.

thereupon, nor otherwise vitiating their holy faith with a lewd and wicked conversation) peace shall be upon them, and upon the Israel of God." Now Dr. Potter knows, that the mystery of the blessed Trinity is not universally received in the whole Christian world, as appears in very many heretics in Polony, Hungary, and Transilvania, and therefore according to this rule of Dr. Usher, approved by Dr. Potter, the denial of the blessed Trinity shall not exclude salvation.

17. "Let me note, by the way, that you might have easily espied a foul contradiction in the said words of Dr. Usher, by you cited, and so much applauded. For he supposeth that a man agrees with other churches in belief which, joined with holy obedience, may bring him to everlasting salvation, and yet that he may superinduce damnable heresies. For how can he superinduce damnable heresies, who is supposed to believe all truths necessary to salvation? Can there be any damnable heresy, unless it contradict some necessary truth, which cannot happen in one who is supposed to believe all necessary truths? Besides, if one believing all fundamental articles in the Creed, may superinduce damnable heresies, it followeth, that the fundamental truths, contrary to those damnable heresies, are not contained in the Creed.

18. "According to this model of Dr. Potter's foundation, consisting in the agreement of scarcely one point of faith; what a strange church would he make of men concurring in some one or few articles of belief, who yet for the rest should be holding conceits plainly contradictory; so patching up a religion of men who agree only in the article, that Christ is our Saviour, but for the

rest, are like to the parts of a chimera; having the head of a man, the neck of a horse, the shoulders of an ox, the foot of a lion, &c. I wrong them not herein. For in good philosophy, there is greater repugnancy between assent and dissent, affirmation and negation, *est, est, non, non,* (especially when all these contradictories pretend to rely upon one and the self-same motive—the infallible truth of Almighty God) than between the integral parts, as head, neck, &c. of a man, horse, lion, &c. And thus protestants are far more bold to disagree, even in matters of faith, than catholic divines in questions merely philosophical, or not determined by the church. And while thus they stand only upon fundamental articles, they do by their own confession destroy the church, which is the house of God. For the foundation alone of a house is not a house, nor can they, in such an imaginary church, any more expect salvation, than the foundation alone of a house is fit to afford a man habitation.

19. "Moreover, it is most evident that protestants, by this chaos rather than church, do give unavoidable occasion of desperation to poor souls. Let some one who is desirous to save his soul repair to Dr. Potter, who maintains these grounds, to know upon whom he may rely in a matter of so great consequence: I suppose the Doctor's answer will be, upon the truly catholic church. She cannot err damnably. What understand you by the catholic church? Cannot general councils, which are the church representative, err? Yes, they may weakly or * wilfully misapply, or mis-

* Page 167.

understand, or neglect Scripture, and so err damnably. To whom then shall I go for my particular instruction? I cannot confer with the united body of the whole church about my particular difficulties, as yourself affirms, that the catholic church cannot be told* of private injuries. Must I then consult with every particular person of the catholic church? So it seems by what you write in these words, 'The whole †militant church (that is, all the members of it) cannot possibly err, either in the whole faith, or any necessary article of it.' You say M. Doctor I cannot for my instruction acquaint the universal church with my particular scruples. You say the prelates of God's church meeting in a lawful general council may err damnably: it remains then for my necessary instruction, I must repair to every particular member of the universal church, spread over the face of the earth: and yet you teach that the promises‡ which our Lord hath made unto his church for his assistance, are intended not to any particular persons or churches, but only to the church catholic, with which (as I said) it is impossible for me to confer. Alas! O most uncomfortable ghostly father, you drive me to desperation! How shall I confer with every Christian soul, man and woman, by sea and by land, close prisoner or at liberty? &c. Yet upon supposal of this miraculous pilgrimage for faith, before I have the faith of miracles, how shall I proceed at our meeting? Or how shall I know the man on whom I may securely rely? Procure (will you say) to know whether he believe all fundamental points of faith; for if he do,

* Page 27. † Page 150, 151. ‡ Page 151.

his faith, for point of belief, is sufficient for salvation, though he err in a hundred things of less moment. But how shall I know, whether he hold all fundamental points or no? For till you tell me this, I cannot know whether or no his belief be sound in all fundamental points. Can you say the Creed? Yes, and so can many damnable heretics. But why do you ask me this question? Because the Creed contains all fundamental points of faith. Are you sure of that? Not sure: I hold it very probable.* Shall I hazard my soul on probabilities, or even wagers? This yields a new cause of despair. But what? doth the Creed contain all points necessary to be believed, whether they rest in the understanding, or else do further extend to practice? *No.* It was composed to deliver *credenda*, not *agenda* to us; faith, not practice. How then shall I know what points of belief, which directs my practice, be necessary to salvation? Still you chalk out new paths for desperation. Well, are all articles of the Creed, for their nature and matter, fundamental? I cannot say so. How then shall I know which in particular be and which be not fundamental? Read my answer to a late popish pamphlet, intitled Charity Mistaken, &c. there you shall find, that fundamental doctrines are such catholic verities, as principally and essentially pertain †to the faith, such as properly constitute a church, and are necessary (in ordinary course) to be distinctly believed by every Christian that will be saved. They are those grand and capital doctrines which make up our faith in Christ; that is, that common faith which is alike

* Page 241. † Page 211. 213, 214.

precious in all, being one and the same in the highest apostle, and the meanest believer, which the apostle elsewhere calls the first principles of the oracles of God, and the form of sound words. But how shall I apply these general definitions or descriptions, or (to say the truth) these only varied words and phrases (for I understand the word fundamental as well as the words principal, essential, grand, and capital doctrines, &c.) to the particular articles of the Creed, in such sort, as that I may be able precisely, exactly, particularly, to distinguish fundamental articles from points of less moment? You labour to tell us what fundamental points be, but not which they be; and yet unless you do this, your doctrine serves only either to make men despair, or else to have recourse to those whom you call papists, and who give one certain rule, that all points defined by Christ's visible church belong to the foundation of faith, in such sense as that to deny any one cannot stand with salvation. And seeing yourself acknowledges that these men do not err in points fundamental, I cannot but hold it most safe for me to join with them, for the securing of my soul, and the avoiding of desperation, into which this your doctrine must cast all them who understand and believe it. For the whole discourse and inference which here I have made, are either your own direct assertions, or evident consequences clearly deduced from them.

20. "But now let us answer some few objections of Dr. Potter's, against that which we have said before: to avoid our argument, that the Scripture is not so much as mentioned in the Creed, he saith, 'the Creed is an abstract of such

necessary *doctrines as are delivered in Scripture,' or collected out of it; and therefore needs not express the authority of that which it supposes.

21. "This answer makes for us. For by giving a reason why it was needless that Scripture should be expressed in the Creed, you grant as much as we desire; namely, that the apostles judged it needless to express all necessary points of faith in their Creed. Neither doth the Creed suppose, or depend on Scripture in such sort as that we can, by any probable consequence, infer from the articles of the Creed, that there is any canonical Scripture at all; and much less that such books in particular be canonical. Yea, the Creed might have been the same, although Holy Scripture had never been written; and, which is more, the Creed, even in priority of time was before all the scripture of the New Testament, except the Gospel of St. Matthew. And so, according to this reason of his, the Scripture should not mention articles contained in the Creed. And I note in a word, how little connexion Dr. Potter's arguments have while he tells us, that 'the Creed† is an abstract of such necessary doctrines as are delivered in Scripture, or collected out of it, and therefore needs not express the authority of that which it supposes;' it doth not follow: the articles of the Creed are delivered in Scripture; therefore the Creed supposeth Scripture. For two distinct writings may well deliver the same truths, and yet one of them not suppose the other, unless Dr. Potter be of opinion that two doctors cannot, at one time, speak the same truth.

* Page 234. † Ibid.

22. "And notwithstanding that Dr. Potter hath now told us, it was needless that the Creed should express Scripture, whose authority it supposes; he comes at length to say, that the Nicene fathers in their Creed confessing that the Holy Ghost spake by the prophets, do thereby sufficiently avow the Divine authority of all canonical Scripture. But I would ask him, whether the Nicene Creed be not also an abstract of doctrines delivered in Scripture, as he said of the Apostles' Creed, and thence did infer, that it was needless to express Scripture, whose authority it supposes? Besides, we do not only believe, in general, that canonical Scripture is of Divine authority, but we are also bound, under pain of damnation, to believe, that such and such particular books, not mentioned in the Nicene Creed, are canonical. And, lastly, Dr. Potter in this answer grants as much as we desire; which is, that all points of faith are not contained in the Apostles' Creed, even as it is explained by other Creeds. For these words, 'who spake by the prophets,' are no way contained in the Apostles' Creed, and therefore contain an addition, not an explanation thereof.

23. "But, 'how can it be necessary (saith Dr. Potter) for any Christian to have more in his Creed than the * apostles had, and the church of their times?' I answer, you trifle, not distinguishing between the apostles' belief, and that abridgment of some articles of faith, which we call the Apostles' Creed; and withal, you beg the question, by supposing the apostles believed no more than is contained in their Creed, which every un-

* Page 221.

learned person knows and believes; and I hope you will not deny but the apostles were endued with greater knowledge than ordinary persons.

24. " Your pretended proof out of the Acts, that the apostles revealed to the church 'the whole counsel of God,' keeping * back nothing, with your gloss (needful for our salvation) is no proof, unless you still beg the question, and do suppose, that whatsoever the apostles revealed to the church is contained in the Creed. And I wonder you do not reflect that those words were by St. Paul particularly directed to pastors and governors of the church, as is clear by the other words, " he called the ancients of the church." And afterward, " take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops to rule the church." And yourself say, that 'more knowledge is † necessary in bishops, and priests, to whom is committed the government of the church, and care of souls, than in vulgar laics.' Do you think that the apostles taught Christians nothing but their Creed? Said they nothing of the sacraments, commandments, duties of hope, charity, &c.

25. " Upon the same affected ambiguity is grounded your other objections: 'to say, the whole faith of those times ‡ is not contained in the Apostles' Creed, is all one as if a man should say, this is not the Apostles' Creed, but a part of it.' For the faith of the apostles is not all one with that which we commonly call their Creed. Did not, I pray you, St. Matthew and St. John believe their writings to be canonical Scripture?

* Acts xx. 27. † Page 244. ‡ Page 222, 223.

And yet their writings are not mentioned in the Creed. It is therefore more than clear that the faith of the apostles is of larger extent than the Apostles' Creed.

26. "To your demand, why, amongst many things of equal necessity to be believed, the apostles should * so distinctly set down some, and be altogether silent of others? I answer, that you must answer your own demand. For in the Creed there be diverse points, in their nature, not fundamental or necessary to be explicitly and distinctly believed, as above we shewed; why are these points which are not fundamental expressed rather than other of the same quality? Why our Saviour's descent to hell, and burial, expressed, and not his circumcision, his manifestation to the three kings, working of miracles, &c. Why did they not express Scriptures, sacraments, and all fundamental points of faith tending to practice, as well as those which rest in belief? Their intention was, particularly to deliver such articles as were fittest for those times, concerning the Deity, Trinity, and Messias, (as heretofore I have declared) leaving many things to be taught by the catholic church, which in the Creed we all profess to believe. Neither doth it follow, as you infer—that 'as well, nay better, they might have given no article, but that (of the church) and sent us to the church for all the rest. For in setting down others besides that, and not all, they make us believe we have all, when † we have not all.' For by this kind of arguing, what may not be deduced? One might, quite contrary to your inference, say,

* Page 225. † Page 223.

if the Apostles' Creed contain all points necessary to salvation, what need we any church to teach us? and, consequently, what need of the article concerning the church? What need we the creeds of Nice, Constantinople, &c.? Superfluous are your catechisms, wherein, besides the articles of the Creed, you add divers other particulars. These would be poor consequences, and so is yours. But shall I tell you news? for so you are pleased to esteem it. We grant your inference thus far; that our Saviour Christ referred us to his church, by her to be taught, and by her alone. For she was before the Creed, and Scripture; and she, to discharge this imposed office of instructing us, hath delivered us the Creed, but not it alone, as if *nothing* else were to be believed. We have, besides it, Holy Scripture; we have unwritten, Divine, apostolical, ecclesiastical traditions. It were a childish argument, the Creed contains not all things which are necessary to be believed: *ergo*, it is not profitable. Or, the church alone is sufficient to teach us by some convenient means: *ergo*, she must teach us without all means, without creeds, without councils, without Scripture, &c. If the apostles had expressed no article, but that of the catholic church, she must have taught us the other articles in particular, by creeds, or other means, as in fact we have even the Apostles' Creed from the tradition of the church. If you will believe you have all in the Creed, when you have not at all, it is not the apostles, or the church, that makes you so believe, but it is your own error, whereby you will needs believe that the Creed must contain all. For neither the apostles, nor the church, nor the Creed itself tell you any

such matter; and what necessity is there that one means of instruction must involve whatsoever is contained in all the rest? We are not to recite the Creed with anticipated persuasion, that it must contain what we imagine it ought, for better maintaining some opinions of our own; but we ought to say, and believe, that it contains what we find in it, of which one article is, to believe the catholic church, surely to be taught by her, which presupposeth that we need other instruction beside the Creed; and in particular we may learn of her what points be contained in the Creed, what otherwise; and so we shall not be deceived, by believing we have all in the Creed, when we have not all; and you may in the same manner say—as well, nay better; the apostles might have given us no articles at all, as have left out articles tending to practice. For in setting down one sort of article, and not the other, they make us believe we have all, when we have not all.

27. "To our argument, that baptism is not contained in the Creed, Dr. Potter, besides his answer, that sacraments belong rather to practice than faith, (which I have already confuted, and which indeed maketh against himself, and serveth only to shew that the apostles intended not to comprise all points in the Creed which we are bound to believe) adds that the Creed of * Nice, expressed baptism by name ('I confess one baptism for the remission of sins'). Which answer is directly against himself, and manifestly proves that baptism is an article of faith, and yet is not

* Page 237.

contained in the Apostles' Creed, neither explicitly, nor by any necessary consequence from other articles expressed therein. If, to make it an article of faith, it be sufficient that it is contained in the Nicene council; he will find that protestants maintain many errors against faith, as being repugnant to definitions of general councils; as, in particular, that the very council of Nice (which, saith Mr. Whitgift, * is of all wise and learned men reverenced, esteemed, and embraced, next unto the Scriptures themselves) decreed, that to those who were chosen to the ministry unmarried, it was not lawful to take any wife afterwards, is affirmed by protestants. And your grand reformer, Luther (*Lib. de Conciliis parte prima*) saith, that he understands not the Holy Ghost in that council. For in one canon it saith, that those who have gelded themselves are not fit to be made priests, in another it forbids them to have wives. Hath (saith he) the Holy Ghost nothing to do in councils, but to bind and load his ministers, with impossible, dangerous, and unnecessary laws? I forbear to shew that this very article, 'I confess one baptism for the remission of sins,' will be understood by protestants in a far different sense from catholics; yea, protestants among themselves do not agree, how baptism forgives sins, nor what grace it confers. Only concerning the unity of baptism against rebaptization of such as were once baptized, (which I noted as a point not contained in the Apostles' Creed) I cannot omit an excellent place of St. Augustine, where, speaking of the Donatists, he hath these words: 'they are so

* In his Defence, p. 330.

bold as * to rebaptize catholics, wherein they shew themselves to be the greater heretics, since it hath pleased the universal catholic church not to make baptism void even in the very heretics themselves.' In which few words, this holy father delivereth against the Donatists these points which do also make against protestants: that to make a heresy, or a heretic, known to such, it is sufficient to oppose the definition of God's church: that a proposition may be heretical, though it be not repugnant to any texts of Scripture. For St. Augustine teacheth that the doctrine of rebaptization is heretical, and yet acknowledgeth it cannot be convinced for such out of Scripture. And that neither the heresy of rebaptization of those who were baptized by heretics, nor the contrary catholic truth being expressed in the Apostles' Creed, it followeth that it doth not contain all points of faith necessary to salvation. And so we must conclude, that to believe the Creed is not sufficient for unity of faith, and spirit, in the same church; unless there be also a total agreement both in belief of other points of faith, and in external profession, and communion also: (whereof we are to speak in the next chapter) according to the saying of St. Augustine: 'you are † with us in baptism, and in the Creed; but in the spirit of unity, and bond of peace, and, lastly, in the catholic church, you are not with us.'"

* Lib. de Hæres. in 69. † Aug. Ep. 48.

THE

ANSWER TO THE FOURTH CHAPTER:

Wherein is shewed, that the Creed contains all necessary points of mere belief.

1. Ad. §. 1—6. Concerning the Creed's containing the fundamentals of Christianity, this is Dr. Potter's assertion, delivered in the 207th page of his book. "The Creed of the apostles (as it is explained in the latter creeds of the catholic church) is esteemed a sufficient summary or catalogue of fundamentals by the best learned Romanists, and by antiquity."

2. By fundamentals he understands not the fundamental rules of good life and action, (though every one of these is to be believed to come from God, and therefore virtually includes an article of the faith): but the fundamental doctrines of faith, such as though they have influence upon our lives, as every essential doctrine of Christianity hath, yet we are commanded to believe them, and not to do them. The assent of our understandings is required to them, but not obedience from our wills.

3. But these speculative doctrines again he distinguisheth out of Aquinas, Occham, and Canus, and others, into two kinds: of the first are those which are the objects of faith, in and for themselves, which, by their own nature and God's prime intention, are essential parts of the gospel; such

as the teachers in the church cannot without mortal sin omit to teach the learners; such as are intrinsical to the covenant between God and man; and not only plainly revealed by God, and so certain truths, but also commanded to be preached to all men, and to be believed distinctly by all, and so necessary truths. Of the second sort are accidental, circumstantial, occasional objects of faith; millions whereof there are in Holy Scripture; such as are to be believed, not for themselves, but because they are joined with others, that are necessary to be believed, and delivered by the same authority which delivered these. Such as we are not bound to know to be Divine revelations, (for without any fault we may be ignorant hereof, nay, believe the contrary;) such as we are not bound to examine, whether or no they be Divine revelations; such as pastors are not bound to teach their flock, nor their flock bound to know and remember; no, nor the pastors themselves to know them or believe them, or not to disbelieve them absolutely and always; but then only when they do see, and know them to be delivered in Scripture, as Divine revelations.

4. I say when they do so, and not only when they may do. For to lay an obligation upon us of believing, or not disbelieving any verity, sufficient revelation on God's part is not sufficient: for then, seeing all the express verities of Scripture are either to all men, or at least to all learned men, sufficiently revealed by God it should be a damnable sin, in any learned man actually to disbelieve any one particular historical verity contained in Scripture, or to believe the contradiction of it, though he knew it not to be there

contained. For though he did not, yet he might have known it; it being plainly revealed by God, and this revelation being extant in such a book, wherein he might have found it recorded, if with diligence he had perused it. To make, therefore, any points necessary to be believed, it is requisite that either we actually know them to be Divine revelations; and these though they be not articles of faith nor necessary to be believed, in and for themselves, yet indirectly, and by accident, and by consequence they are so: the necessity of believing them being enforced upon us by a necessity of believing this essential and fundamental article of faith—that all Divine revelations are true—which to disbelieve, or not to believe, is for any Christians not only impious, but impossible. Or else it is requisite that they be first actually revealed by God: Secondly, Commanded, under pain of damnation, to be particularly known, (I mean known to be Divine revelations,) and distinctly to be believed. And of this latter sort of speculative Divine verities, Dr. Potter affirmed, that the Apostles' Creed was a sufficient summary; yet he affirmed it not as his own opinion, but as the doctrine of the ancient fathers, and your own doctors. And besides, he affirmed it not as absolutely certain, but very probable.

5. In brief, all that he says is this:—It is very probable, that according to the judgment of the Roman doctors, and the ancient fathers, the Apostles' Creed is to be esteemed a sufficient summary of all those doctrines which being merely *credenda*, and not *agenda*, all men are ordinarily, under pain of damnation, bound particularly to believe.

6. Now this assertion (you say) is neither pertinent to the question in hand, nor in itself true. Your reasons to prove it impertinent, put into form, and divested of impertinences, are these: 1. Because the question was not—What points were necessary to be explicitly believed, but what points were necessary not to be disbelieved after sufficient proposal? And therefore, to give a catalogue of points necessary to be explicitly believed, is impertinent.

7. Secondly, Because errors may be damnable, though the contrary truths be not of themselves fundamental; as, that Pontius Pilate was our Saviour's judge is not in itself a fundamental truth, yet to believe the contrary were a damnable error. And therefore, to give a catalogue of truths, in themselves fundamental, is no pertinent satisfaction to this demand, what errors are damnable.

8. Thirdly, Because, if the church be not universally infallible, we cannot ground any certainty upon the Creed, which we must receive upon the credit of the church: and, if the church be universally infallible, it is damnable to oppose her declaration in any thing, though not contained in the Creed.

9. Fourthly, Because not to believe the articles of the Creed in the true sense is damnable, therefore it is frivolous to say the Creed contains all fundamentals, without specifying in what sense the articles of it are fundamental.

10. Fifthly, Because the Apostles' Creed (as Dr. Potter himself confesseth) was not a sufficient catalogue until it was explained by the first council; nor then until it was declared in the second, &c. by occasion of emergent heresies: therefore now, also, as new heresies may arise, it will need par-

ticular explanation; and so is not yet, nor ever will be, a complete catalogue of fundamentals.

11. Now to the first of these objections, I say, First, That your distinction, between points necessary to be believed and necessary not to be disbelieved, is more subtle than sound; a distinction without a difference; there being no point necessary to be believed, which is not necessary not to be disbelieved: nor no point to any man, at any time, in any circumstances, necessary not to be disbelieved, but it is to the same man at the same time, in the same circumstances, necessary to be believed. Yet that which (I believe) you would have said, I acknowledge true; that many points which are not necessary to be believed absolutely, are yet necessary to be believed upon a supposition, that they are known to be revealed by God; that is, become then necessary to be believed, when they are known to be Divine revelations. But then I must needs say, you do very strangely, in saying, that the question was—What points might lawfully be disbelieved, after sufficient proposition that they are Divine revelations? You affirm, that none may; and so doth Dr. Potter, and with him all protestants, and all Christians. And how then is this the question? Who ever said, or thought, that of Divine revelations, known to be so, some might safely and lawfully be rejected, and disbelieved, under pretence that they are not fundamental? Which of us ever taught, that it was not damnable, either to deny, or so much as doubt of the truth of any thing whereof we either know, or believe, that God hath revealed it? What protestant ever taught that it was not damnable, either to give God the lie, or

to call his veracity into question? Yet, you say, "the demand of Charity Mistaken was, and it was most reasonable, that a list of fundamentals should be given, the denial whereof destroys salvation, whereas the denial of other points may stand with salvation, although both kinds be equally proposed as revealed by God."

12. Let the reader peruse Charity Mistaken, and he will find that this qualification, "although both kinds of points be equally proposed as revealed by God," is your addition, and no part of the demand. And if it had, it had been most unreasonable, seeing he and you know well enough, that (though we do not presently, without examination, fall down and worship all your church's proposals as Divine revelations) yet we make no such distinction of known Divine revelations, as if some only of them were necessary to be believed, and the rest might safely be rejected. So that to demand a particular minute catalogue of all points that may not be disbelieved after sufficient proposition, is indeed to demand a catalogue of all points that are or may be, inasmuch as none may be disbelieved after sufficient proposition that it is a Divine revelation. At least it is to desire us, First, To transcribe into this catalogue every text of the whole Bible. Secondly, To set down distinctly those innumerous millions of negative and positive consequences, which may be evidently deduced from it: for these, we say, God hath revealed. And, indeed, you are not ashamed in plain terms to require this of us. For having first told us, that 'the demand was, what points were necessary not to be disbelieved after sufficient proposition that they are Divine truth:' you come to

say, "certainly the Creed contains not all these." And this you prove by asking, "How many truths are there in Holy Scripture, or contained in the Creed, which we are not bound to know and believe, but are bound, under pain of damnation, not to reject, as soon as we come to know that they are found in Holy Scripture?" So that, in requiring a particular catalogue of all points not to be disbelieved after sufficient proposal, you require us to set you down all points contained in Scripture, or evidently deducible from it. And yet this you are pleased to call a reasonable, nay a most reasonable demand; whereas, having engaged yourself to give a catalogue of your fundamentals, you conceive your engagement very well satisfied by saying—*All is fundamental which the church proposeth, without going about to give us* an endless inventory of her proposals. And therefore from us, instead of a perfect particular of Divine revelations of all sorts, (of which, with a less hyperbole than St. John useth, we might say, "if they were to be written, the world would not hold the books that must be written;") methinks you should accept of this general—All Divine revelations are true, and to be believed; which yet I say, not as if I thought the belief of this general sufficient to salvation; but because I conceive it as sufficient as the belief of your general; and therefore I said not—Methinks all should accept of this general, but methinks you should accept of it.

13. The very truth is, the main question in this business is not—What Divine revelations are necessary to be believed, or not rejected when they are sufficiently proposed? for all, without ex-

ception, all without question are so: but—What revelations are simply and absolutely necessary to be proposed to the belief of Christians; so that that society, which doth propose, and indeed believe them, hath, for matter of faith, the essence of a true church; that which doth not, hath not? Now to this question, though not to yours, Dr. Potter's assertion (if it be true) is apparently very pertinent. And though not a full and total satisfaction to it, yet very effectual, and of great moment towards it. For the main question being—What points are necessary to salvation? and points necessary to salvation being of two sorts, some of simple belief, some of practice and obedience, he that gives you a sufficient summary of the first sort of necessary points, hath brought you half way towards your journey's end. And therefore that which he doth, is no more to be slighted, as vain and impertinent, than an architect's work is to be thought impertinent towards the making of a house, because he doth it not all himself. Sure I am, if his assertion be true, as I believe it is, a corollary may presently be deduced from it, which, if it were embraced, cannot in all reason but do infinite service, both to the truth of Christ, and the peace of Christendom. For seeing falsehood and error could not long stand against the power of truth, were they not supported by tyranny and worldly advantage, he that could assert Christians to that liberty which Christ and his apostles left them, must needs do truth a most heroical service. And seeing the overvaluing of the differences among Christians, is one of the greatest maintainers of the schisms of Christendom, he that could demonstrate, that only these points of

belief are simply necessary to salvation, wherein Christians generally agree, should he not lay a very fair and firm foundation of the peace of Christendom? Now the corollary, which, I conceive, would produce these good effects, and which flows naturally from Dr. Potter's assertion, is this:—That what man or church soever believes the Creed, and all the evident consequences of it sincerely, and heartily, cannot possibly (if also he believe the Scripture) be in any error of simple belief which is offensive to God; nor therefore deserve for any such error to be deprived of his life, or to be cut off from the church's communion, and the hope of salvation.—And the production of this again would be this (which highly concerns the church of Rome to think of,)—That whatsoever man or church doth for any error of simple belief, deprive any man so qualified as above, either of his temporal life, or livelihood, or liberty, or of the church's communion, and hope of salvation, is for the first, unjust, cruel, and tyrannous; schismatical, presumptuous, and uncharitable for the second.

13. Neither yet is this (as you pretend) to take away the necessity of believing those verities of Scripture, which are not contained in the Creed, when once we come to know that they are written in Scripture, but rather to lay a necessity upon men of believing all things written in Scripture, when once they know them to be there written. For he that believes not all known Divine revelations to be true, how doth he believe in God? Unless you will say, that the same man, at the same time, may not believe God, and yet believe in him. The greater difficulty is, how it will not

take away the necessity of the believing Scripture to be the word of God? But that it will not neither. For though the Creed be granted a sufficient summary of articles of mere faith, yet no man pretends that it contains the rules of obedience; but for them all men are referred to Scripture. Besides, he that pretends to believe in God, obligeth himself to believe it necessary to obey that which reason assures him to be the will of God. Now reason will assure him that believes the Creed, that it is the will of God he should believe the Scripture: even the very same reason which moves him to believe the Creed: universal and never-failing tradition having given this testimony both to Creed and Scripture, that they both by the works of God were sealed, and testified to be the words of God. And thus much be spoken in answer to your first argument; the length whereof will be the more excusable, if I oblige myself to say but little to the rest.

14. I come then to your Second; and, in answer to it, deny flatly, as a thing destructive of itself, that any error can be damnable, unless it be repugnant immediately or mediately, directly or indirectly, of itself or by accident, to some truth for the matter of it fundamental. And to your example of Pontius Pilate being judge of Christ, I say, the denial of it in him that knows it to be revealed by God, is manifestly destructive of this fundamental truth, that all Divine revelations are true. Neither will you find any error so much as by accident damnable, but the rejecting of it will be necessarily laid upon us, by a real belief of all fundamentals, and simply necessary truths. And I desire you would reconcile with

this, that which you have said §. 15. "Every fundamental error must have a contrary fundamental truth, because of two contradictory propositions, in the same degree, if the one is false, the other must be true," &c.

15. To the Third I answer, That the certainty I have of the Creed, that it was from the apostles, and contains the principles of faith, I ground it not upon Scripture, and yet not upon the infallibility of any present, much less of your church, but upon the authority of the ancient church, and written tradition, which (as Dr. Potter hath proved) gave this constant testimony unto it. Besides, I tell you, it is guilty of the same fault which Dr. Potter's assertion is here accused of; having, perhaps, some colour towards the proving it false, but none at all to shew it impertinent.

16. To the Fourth, I answer plainly thus, That you find fault with Dr. Potter for his virtues: you are offended with him for not usurping the authority which he hath not; in a word, for not playing the pope. Certainly, if protestants be faulty in this matter, it is for doing it too much, and not too little. This presumptuous imposing of the senses of men upon the words of God, the special senses of men upon the general words of God, and laying them upon men's consciences together, under the equal penalty of death and damnation; this vain conceit that we can speak of the things of God, better than in the words of God: this deifying our own interpretations, and tyrannous enforcing them upon others; this restraining of the word of God from that latitude and generality, and the understandings of men from that liberty,

wherein Christ and the apostles left them, *is, and hath been, the only fountain of all the schisms of the church, and that which makes them immortal: the common incendiary of Christendom, and that which (as I said before) tears into pieces, not the coat, but the bowels and members of Christ: *Ridente Turca nec dolente Judæo.* Take away these walls of separation, and all will quickly be one. Take away this persecuting, burning, cursing, damning of men for not subscribing to the words of men, as the words of God; require of Christians only to believe Christ, and to call no man master but him only; let those leave claiming infallibility that have no title to it, and let them that in their words disclaim it, disclaim it likewise in their actions. In a word, take away tyranny, which is the devil's instrument to support errors, and superstitions, and impieties, in the several parts of the world, which could not otherwise long withstand the power of truth; I say, take away tyranny, and restore Christians to their just and full liberty of captivating their understanding to Scripture only, and as rivers, when they have a free passage, run all to the ocean, so it may well be hoped, by God's blessing, that universal liberty, thus moderated, may quickly reduce Christendom to truth and unity. These thoughts of peace (I am persuaded) may come from the God of peace, and to his blessing I commend them, and proceed.

* This persuasion is no singularity of mine, but the doctrine which I have learned from divines of great learning and judgment. Let the reader be pleased to peruse the seventh book of Acont. de Strat. Satanæ, and Zanchius' last Oration delivered by him, after the composing of the discord between him and Amerbachius, and he shall confess as much.

18. Your Fifth and last objection stands upon a false and dangerous supposition—that new heresies may arise. For a heresy being in itself nothing else but a doctrine repugnant to some article of the Christian faith, to say that new heresies may arise, is to say, that new articles of faith may arise: and so some great ones among you stick not to profess in plain terms, who yet, at the same time, are not ashamed to pretend that your whole doctrine is catholic and apostolic; so Salmeron: *Non omnibus omnia dedit Deus, ut quælibet ætas suis gaudeat veritatibus, quas prior ætas ignoravit.* "God hath not given all things to all; so that every age hath its proper verities, which the former age was ignorant of." Dis. 57. in Epist. ad Rom.—And again in the margin, *Habet unumquodque seculum peculiares revelationes Divinas.* "Every age hath its peculiar Divine revelations." Where that he speaks of such revelations, as are, or may by the church be made matters of faith, no man can doubt that reads him; an example whereof he gives us a little before in these words: *Unius Augustini doctrina assumptionis B. Deiparæ cultum in ecclesiam introduxit.* "The doctrine of Augustine only hath brought into the church the worship of the assumption of the mother of God," &c. Others again mince and palliate the matter with this pretence, that your church undertakes not to coin new articles of faith, but only to declare those that want sufficient declaration: but if sufficient declaration be necessary to make any doctrine an article of faith, then this doctrine, which before wanted it, was not before an article of faith; and your church by giving it the essential form, and last complement of an article of faith, makes

it, though not a truth, yet certainly an article of faith. But I would fain know, whether Christ and his apostles knew this doctrine, which you pretend hath the matter, but wants the form, of an article of faith; that is, sufficient declaration, whether they knew it to be a necessary article of the faith or no? If they knew it not to be so, then either they taught what they knew not, which were very strange, or else they taught it not; and, if not, I would gladly be informed, seeing you pretend to no new revelations, from whom you learned it? If they knew it, then either they concealed or declared it. To say, they concealed any necessary part of the gospel, is to charge them with far greater sacrilege, than what was punished in Ananias and Sapphira. It is to charge these glorious stewards, and dispensers of the mystery of Christ, with want of the great virtue requisite in a steward, which is fidelity. It is to charge them with presumption for denouncing anathemas even to angels, in case they should teach any other doctrine than what they had received from them, which sure could not merit an anathema, if they left any necessary part of the gospel untaught. It is, in a word, in plain terms, to give them the lie, seeing they profess, plainly and frequently, that they taught Christians the whole doctrine of Christ. If they did know and declare it, then was it a full and formal article of faith; and the contrary a full and formal heresy, without any need of further declaration; and then their successors either continued the declaration of it, or discontinued it: if they did the latter, how are they such faithful depositaries of apostolic doctrine as you pretend? Or, what as-

surance can you give us, that they might not bring in new and false articles, as well as suffer the old and true ones to be lost? If they did continue the declaration of it, and deliver it to their successors, and they to theirs, and so on perpetually; then continued it still a full and formal article of faith, and the repugnant doctrine a full and formal heresy, without and before the definition or declaration of a council. So that councils, as they cannot make that a truth or falsehood, which before was not so: so neither can they make or declare that to be an article of faith, or a heresy, which before was not so. The supposition therefore on which this argument stands, being false and ruinous, whatsoever is built upon it, must together with it fall to the ground. This explication therefore, and restriction of this doctrine, (whereof you make your advantage) was to my understanding unnecessary. The fathers of the church in after-times might have just cause to declare their judgment, touching the sense of some general articles of the Creed: but to oblige others to receive their declarations, under pain of damnation, what warrant they had, I know not. He that can shew, either that the church of all ages was to have this authority, or that it continued in the church for some ages, and then expired: he that can shew either of these things, let him: for my part, I cannot. Yet I willingly confess the judgment of a council, though not infallible, is yet so far directive and obliging, that without apparent reason to the contrary, it may be a sin to reject it, at least not to afford it an outward submission for public peace sake.

19. Ad §. 7—9. Were I not peradventure more

fearful than I need to be of the imputation of tergiversation, I might very easily rid my hands of the remainder of this chapter: for in the question there discussed, you grant (for aught I see) as much as Dr. Potter desires; and Dr. Potter grants as much as you desire: and therefore that I should disease myself, or my reader with a punctual examination of it, may seem superfluous. First, that which you would have, and which your arguments wholly drive at, is this—that the Creed doth not contain all main and principal points of faith of all sorts, whether they be speculative, or practical, whether they contain matter of simple belief, or whether they contain matter of practice and obedience. This Dr. Potter grants, p. 215. 235. And you grant that he grants it, §. 8. where your words are "even by Dr. Potter's own confession, it (the Creed) doth not comprehend *agenda*, or things belonging to practice, as sacraments, commandments, the act of hope, and duties of charity." And if you will infer from hence, that therefore C. M. hath no reason to rest in the Apostles' Creed, as a perfect catalogue of fundamentals, and a full satisfaction to his demand, I have, without any offence of Dr. Potter, granted as much, if that would content you. But seeing you go on, and because his assertion is not (as neither is it pretended to be) a total satisfaction to the demand, cashier it as impertinent, and nothing towards it, here I have been bold to stop your proceeding as unjust and unreasonable. For, as if you should request a friend to lend you, or demand of a debtor to pay you a hundred pounds, and he could or should let you have but fifty, this were not fully to satisfy your demand, yet sure it were not to do nothing

towards it: or, as this rejoinder of mine, though it be not an answer to all your book, but only to the first considerable part of it, and so much of the second as is material and falls into the first, yet I hope you will not deal so unkindly with me, as for this reason, to condemn it of impertinence: so Dr. Potter being demanded a catalogue of fundamentals of faith, and finding them of two kinds, and those of one kind summed up to his hand in the Apostles' Creed, and this Creed consigned unto him for such a summary by very great authority; if upon these considerations he hath intreated his demander to accept of thus much, in part of payment, of the Apostles' Creed, as a sufficient summary of these articles of faith, which are merely *credenda*, methinks he has little reason to complain, that he hath not been fairly and squarely dealt with. Especially, seeing for full satisfaction, by Dr. Potter and all protestants, he is referred to Scripture, which we affirm contains evidently all necessary points of faith, and rules of obedience: and seeing Dr. Potter in this very place hath subjoined, though not a catalogue of fundamentals, which (because to some, more is fundamental, to others less, to others nothing at all) had been impossible, yet such a comprehension of them, as may serve every one that will make a conscionable use of it, instead of a catalogue. For thus he says, "It seems to be fundamental to the faith, and for the salvation of every member of the church, that he acknowledge and believe all such points of faith, whereof he may be sufficiently convinced that they belong to the doctrine of Jesus Christ." This general rule, if I should call a catalogue of fundamentals, I should have a president for it with you

above exception, I mean yourself; for chap. 3. §. 19. just such another proposition you have called by this name. Yet because it were a strange figure of speech, I forbear it; only I will be bold to say, that this assertion is as good a catalogue of fundamentals, as any you will bring of your church proposals, though you take as much time to do it, as he that undertook to make an ass speak.

20. I come now to shew that you also have requited Dr. Potter with a mutual courteous acknowledgment of his assertion, that the Creed is a sufficient summary of all the necessary articles of faith, which are merely *credenda*.

21. First, then, §. 8. you have these words: "It cannot be denied that the Creed is most full and complete to that purpose, for which the holy apostles, inspired by God, meant that it should serve, and in that manner as they did intend it; which was, not to comprehend all particular points of faith, but such general heads as were most befitting and requisite for preaching the faith of Christ to Jews and gentiles, and might be briefly and compendiously set down, and easily learned and remembered." These words, I say, being fairly examined without putting them on the rack, will amount to a full acknowledgment of Dr. Potter's assertion. But before I put them to the question, I must crave thus much right of you, to grant me this most reasonable postulate, that the doctrine of repentance from dead works, which St. Paul saith was one of the two only things which he preached, and the doctrine of charity, without which (the same St. Paul assures us that) the knowledge of all mysteries, and all faith is nothing, were doctrines more necessary and requisite, and there-

fore more fit to be preached to Jews and gentiles than these, under what judge our Saviour suffered, that he was buried, and what time he rose again: which you have taught us, chap. 3. §. 2. for their matter and nature in themselves not to be fundamental.

22. And upon this grant, I will ask no leave to conclude, that whereas you say, "the *Apostles'* Creed was intended for a comprehension of such heads of faith, as were most befitting and requisite, for preaching the faith of Christ, &c. You are now, for fear of too much debasing those high doctrines of repentance and charity, to restrain your assertion, as Dr. Potter doth his, and (though you speak indefinitely) to say you meant it, only of those heads of faith, which are merely *credenda*. And then the meaning of it (if it hath any) must be this: that the Creed is full for the apostles' intent, which, being points of simple belief, were most fit and requisite to be preached to Jews and gentiles, and might be briefly and compendiously set down, and easily learned and remembered. Neither I nor you, I believe, can make any other sense of your words than this; and upon this ground thus I subsume. But all the points of belief, which were necessary under pain of damnation for the apostles to preach, and for those to whom the gospel was preached particularly to know and believe, were most fit and requisite, nay, more than so, necessary to be preached to all, both Jews and gentiles, and might be briefly and compendiously set down, and easily learned and remembered: therefore the apostles' intent by your confession was in this Creed to comprehend all such points. And you say, "the Creed is most full and complete, for the purpose which they intended." The major of

this syllogism is your own. The minor, I should think, needs no proof; yet, because all men may not be of my mind, I will prove it by its parts; and the first part thus:

There is the same necessity for the doing of these things, which are commanded to be done, by the same authority under the same penalty.

But the same authority, viz. Divine, under the same penalty, to wit, of damnation, commanded the apostles to preach all these doctrines which we speak of, and those to whom they were preached, particularly to know and believe them; for we speak of those only, which were so commanded, to be preached and believed.

Therefore all these points were alike necessary to be preached to all, both Jews and gentiles.

Now that all these doctrines we speak of, may be briefly and compendiously set down and easily learned and remembered; he that remembers that we speak only of such doctrines as are necessary to be taught and learned, will require hereof no farther demonstration. For (not to put you in mind of what the poet says, *Non sunt longa quibus nihil est quod demere possis*), who sees not, that seeing the greatest part of men are of very mean capacities, that it is necessary that they may be learned easily, which is to be learned of all? What then can hinder me from concluding thus:

All the articles of simple belief, which are fit and requisite to be preached, and may easily be remembered, are by your confession comprised in the Creed:

But all the necessary articles of faith are requi-

site to be preached, and easy to be remembered;

Therefore they are all comprised in the Creed.

Secondly, From grounds granted by you, I argue thus:

Points of belief in themselves fundamental are more requisite to be preached than those which are not so (this is evident).

But the apostles have put into their Creed some points that are not in themselves fundamental: (so you confess, *ubi supra.*)

Therefore if they have put in all most requisite to be preached, they have put in all that in themselves are fundamental.

Thirdly, and lastly, From your own words, §. 26. thus *I conclude* my purpose:

The apostles' intention was, particularly to deliver in the Creed such articles as were *fittest* for those times, concerning the Deity, Trinity, and Messias; (thus you) now I subsume,

But all points simply necessary, by virtue of God's command, to be preached and believed in particular, were as fit for those times as these here mentioned;

Therefore their intention was, to deliver in it particularly all the necessary points of belief.

23. And certainly, he that considers the matter advisedly either must say that the apostles were not the authors of it, or that this was their design in composing it, or that they had none at all. For whereas, you say, "their intent was, to comprehend in it such general heads as were most befitting and requisite for preaching the faith:" and elsewhere, "particularly to deliver such articles as were fittest for those times; every wise man may

easily see that your desire here was, to escape away in a cloud of indefinite terms. For otherwise, instead of such general heads and such articles, why did not you say plainly, all such, or some such? This had been plain dealing; but I fear, cross to your design, which yet you have failed of. For that which you have spoken (though you are loth to speak out) either signifies nothing at all, or that which I and Dr. Potter affirm; viz. that the Apostles' Creed contains all those points of belief, which were, by God's command, of necessity to be preached to all, and believed by all. Neither when I say so, would I be so mistaken, as if I said, that all points in the Creed are thus necessary: for punies in logic know that universal affirmatives are not simply converted. And therefore it may be true, that all such necessary points are in the Creed; though it be not true, that all points in the Creed are thus necessary: which I willingly grant of the points by you mentioned. But this rather confirms, than any way invalidates my assertion. For how could it stand with the apostles' wisdom, to put in any points circumstantial and not necessary, and, at the same time, to leave out any that were essential and necessary for that end, which, you say, they proposed to themselves in making the Creed; that is, the preaching of the faith to Jews and gentiles?

24. Neither may you hope to avoid the pressure of these acknowledgments by pretending as you do, §. 10. that you do indeed acknowledge the Creed to contain all the necessary articles of faith; but yet so, that they are not either there expressed in it, or deducible from it by evident consequence, but only by way of implication or re-

duction. For, first, not to tell you, that no proposition is implied in any other, which is not deducible from it; nor, secondly, that the article of the catholic church, wherein you will have all implied, implies nothing to any purpose of yours, unless out of mere favour we will grant the sense of it to be, that the church is infallible, and that yours is the church. To pass by all this, and require no answer to it, this one thing I may not omit; that the apostles' intent was (by your own confession) particularly to deliver in the Creed such articles of belief as were fittest for those times (and all necessary articles I have proved were such): now to deliver particularly, and to deliver only implicitly; to be delivered particularly in the Creed, and only to be reducible to it; I suppose are repugnances hardly reconcileable. And therefore, though we desire you not to grant, that the Creed contains all points of faith of all sorts, any other way than by implication or reduction, no nor so neither; yet you have granted, and must grant, of the fundamental points of simple belief, those which the apostles were commanded in particular to teach all men, and all men in particular to know and believe, that these are delivered in the Creed, after a more particular, and punctual manner, than implication or reduction comes to.

25. Ad §. 10—15. It is vain for you to hope, that the testimonies of the ancient and modern doctors, alleged to this purpose by Dr. Potter in great abundance, will be turned off with this general deceitful answer, that the allegation of them was needless to prove, that the Creed contains all points of faith, under pretence that you grant it

in manner aforesaid. For what if you grant it in manner aforesaid, yet if you grant it not (as indeed you do but inconsistently) in the sense which their testimonies require, then for all this their testimonies may be alleged to very good purpose. Now let any man read them with any tolerable indifference, and he shall find they say plainly, that all points of faith, necessary to be particularly believed, are explicitly contained in the Creed; and that your gloss of implication and reduction, had it been confronted with their sentences, would have been much out of countenance, as having no ground nor colour of ground in them. For example, if Azorius had thought thus of it, how could he have called it * "a brief comprehension of the faith, and a sum of all things to be believed, and, as it were, a sign or cognizance whereby Christians are to be differenced and distinguished from the impious and misbelievers, who profess either no faith, or not the right?" If Huntly had been of this mind, how could he have said of it, with any congruity, † "that the rule of faith is expressly contained in it, and all the prime foundations of faith:" and, that "the apostles were not so forgetful as to omit any prime principal foundation of faith in that Creed which they delivered to be believed by all Christians?" The words of Filiucius are pregnant to the same purpose: ‡ "There cannot be a fitter rule from whence Christians may learn what they are explicitly to believe, than that which is contained in the Creed." Which words cannot be justified, if all points necessary to be

* Azor. part 1. c. v. † Cont. 2. c. x. n. 10.
‡ Moral. quest. Tr. 22. c. ii. n. 34.

believed explicitly be not comprised in it. "To this end (saith Putean) * was the Creed composed by the apostles, that Christians might have a form whereby they might profess themselves catholics." But certainly, the apostles did this in vain, if a man might profess this, and yet for matter of faith be not a catholic.

26. The words of Cardinal Richelieu† exact this sense, and refuse your gloss as much as any of the former: "The Apostles' Creed is the summary and abridgment of that faith which is necessary for a Christian: these holy persons being by the commandment of Jesus Christ to disperse themselves over the world, and in all parts by preaching the gospel to plant the faith, esteemed it very necessary to reduce into a short sum, all that which Christians ought to know, to the end that being dispersed into divers parts of the world, they might preach the same thing in a short form, that it might be the easier remembered. For this effect they called this abridgment a symbol, which signifies a mark, or sign, which might serve to distinguish true Christians which embraced it, from infidels which rejected it." Now I would fain know how the composition of the Creed could serve for this end, and secure the preachers of it, that they should preach the same thing, if there were other necessary articles, not comprised in it. Or how could it be a sign to distinguish true Christians from others, if a man might believe it all, and for want of believing something else, not be a true Christian?

* In. 2. 2. qu. Art. 3. Dub. ult.

† Instruction du Chrestien. Lecon premiere.

27. The words of the *author of the Consideration of four heads propounded to King James, require the same sense, and utterly renounce your qualification. "The symbol is a brief yet entire methodical sum of Christian doctrine, including all points of faith, either to be preached by the apostles, or to be believed by their disciples; delivered both for a direction unto them, what they were to preach, and others to believe, as also to discern and put a difference betwixt all faithful Christians and misbelieving infidels."

28. Lastly, †Gregory of Valence affirms our assertion even in terms: "The articles of faith contained in the Creed, are, as it were, the first principles of the Christian faith, in which is contained the sum of evangelical doctrine, which all men are bound explicitly to believe."

29. To these testimonies of your own doctors, I should have added the concurrent suffrages of the ancient fathers, but the full and free acknowledgment of the same Valentia, in the place above quoted, will make this labour unnecessary. "So judge (saith he) the holy fathers, affirming that this symbol of faith was composed by the apostles, that all might have a short sum of those things which are to be believed, and are dispersedly contained in Scripture."

30. Neither is there any discord between this assertion of your doctors, and their holding themselves obliged to believe all the points which the council of Trent defines. For protestants and papists may both hold, that all points of belief ne-

* Ch. 3. Confid. 1. Sect. v. p. 110.
† 2. 2. dis. i. q. 2. p. 4. in fin.

cessary to be known and believed, are summed up in the Creed: and yet both the one and the other think themselves bound to believe whatsoever other points they either know, or believe to be revealed by God. For the articles which are necessary to be known that they are revealed by God, may be very few; and yet those which are necessary to be believed, when they are revealed and known to be so, may be very many.

31. But summaries and abstracts are not intended to specify all the particulars of the science or subject to which they belong. Yes, if they be intended for perfect summaries, they must not omit any necessary doctrine of that science whereof they are summaries; though the illustration and reasons of it they may omit. If this were not so, a man might set down forty or fifty of the principal definitions and divisions, and rules of logic, and call it a summary or abstract of logic. But sure, this were no more a summary, than that were the picture of a man in little, that wanted any of the parts of a man; or that a total sum wherein all the particulars were not cast up. Now the Apostles' Creed, you here intimate that it was intended for a summary; otherwise why talk you here of summaries, and tell us that they need not contain all the particulars of their science; and of what I pray may it be a summary, but of the fundamentals of Christian faith? Now you have already told us—that it is most full and complete to that purpose for which it was intended. Lay all this together, and I believe the product will be, that the Apostles' Creed is a perfect summary of the fundamentals of the Christian faith; and what the duty of a perfect summary is, I have already told you.

32. Whereas therefore to disprove this assertion, in divers particles of this chapter, but especially the fourteenth, you muster up whole armies of doctrines, which you pretend are necessary, and not contained in the Creed; I answer very briefly thus: that the doctrines you mention, are either concerning matters of practice, and not simple belief; or else they are such doctrines wherein God hath not so plainly revealed himself, but that honest and good men, true lovers of God and of truth, those that desire above all things to know his will and do it, may err, and yet commit no sin at all, or only a sin of infirmity, and not destructive of salvation; or lastly, they are such doctrines which God hath plainly revealed, and so are necessary to be believed, when they are known to be Divine, but not necessary to be known and believed: not necessary to be known for Divine, that they may be believed. Now all these sorts of doctrines are impertinent to the present question. For Dr. Potter never affirmed, either that the necessary duties of a Christian, or that all truths piously credible, but not necessary to be believed, or that all truths necessary to be believed upon the supposal of Divine revelation, were specified in the Creed. For this he affirms only of such speculative Divine verities, which God hath commanded particularly to be preached to all, and believed by all. Now let the doctrines objected by you be well considered, and let all those that are reducible to the three former heads be discarded; and then of all these instances against Dr. Potter's assertion, there will not remain so much as one.

33. First, Questions touching the conditions to be performed by us to obtain remission of sins;

the sacraments, the commandments, and the possibility of keeping them; the necessity of imploring the assistance of God's grace and Spirit for the keeping of them; how far obedience is due to the church; prayer for the dead; the cessation of the old law: are all about *agenda*, and so cut off upon the first consideration.

34. Secondly, The question touching fundamentals is profitable, but not fundamental. He that believes all fundamentals cannot be damned for any error in faith, though he believe more or less to be fundamental than is so. That also of the procession of the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son, of purgatory, of the church's visibility, of the books of the New Testament, which were doubted of by a considerable part of the primitive church, (until I see better reason for the contrary than the bare authority of men) I shall esteem of the same condition.

35. Thirdly, These doctrines are—That Adam and the angels sinned; that there are angels, good and bad; that those books of Scripture, which were never doubted of by any considerable part of the church, are the word of God; that St. Peter had no such primacy as you pretend; that the Scripture is a perfect rule of faith, and consequently that no necessary doctrine is unwritten; that there is no one society or succession of Christians absolutely infallible. These to my understanding are truths plainly revealed by God, and necessary to be believed by them who know they are so. But not so necessary, that every man and woman is bound under pain of damnation particularly to know them to be Divine revelations, and explicitly to believe them. And for

this reason, these with innumerable other points, are to be referred to the third sort of doctrines above mentioned, which were never pretended to have place in the Creed. There remains one only point of all that army you mustered together, reducible to none of these heads; and that is, that God is, and is a remunerator, which you say is questioned by the denial of merit: but if there were such a necessary indissoluble coherence between this point, and the doctrine of merit, methinks with as much reason, and more charity, you might conclude, that we hold merit, because we hold this point; than that we deny this point, because we deny merit. Besides, when protestants deny the doctrine of merits, you know right well, for so they have declared themselves a thousand times, that they mean nothing else, but with David, that their well-doing extendeth not, is not truly beneficial to God: with our Saviour, when they have done all which they are commanded, they have done their duty only, and no courtesy, And, lastly, with St. Paul, that all which they can suffer for God (and yet suffering is more than doing) "is not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed." So that you must either misunderstand their meaning in denying merit, or you must discharge their doctrine of this odious consequence, or you must charge it on David and Paul, and Christ himself. Nay, you must either grant their denial of true merit just and reasonable; or you must say, that our good actions are really profitable to God: that they are not debts already due to him, but voluntary and undeserved favours: and that they are equal unto and well worthy of eternal glory which is prepared for them. As for the inconvenience which you so

much fear, that the denial of merit makes God a giver only, and not a rewarder; I tell you, good Sir, you fear where no fear is: and that it is both most true, on the one side, that you in holding good works meritorious of eternal glory, make God a rewarder only, and not a giver, contrary to plain Scripture, affirming that "the gift of God is eternal life;" and that it is most false, on the other side, that the doctrine of protestants makes God a giver only, and not a rewarder; inasmuch as their doctrine is—That God gives not heaven but to those which do something for it, and so his gift is also a reward; but withal, that whatsoever they do is due unto God beforehand, and worth nothing to God, and worth nothing in respect of heaven, and so man's work is no merit, and God's reward is still a gift.

36. Put the case the pope, for a reward of your service done him in writing this book, had given you the honour and means of a cardinal, would you not, not only in humility, but in sincerity, have professed that you have not merited such a reward? And yet the pope is neither your creator, nor redeemer, nor preserver, nor perhaps your very great benefactor; sure I am not so great as God Almighty, and therefore hath no such right and title to your service as God hath, in respect of precedent obligations. Besides, the work you have done him hath been really advantageous to him: and, lastly, not altogether unproportionable to the forenamed reward. And, therefore, if by the same work you will pretend that either you have, or hope to have, deserved immortal happiness, I beseech you consider well, whether this be not to set a higher value upon a cardinal's cap than a crown of immor-

tal glory, and with that cardinal to prefer a part in Paris before a part in paradise.

37. In the next paragraph you beat the air again, and fight manfully with your own shadow. The point you should have spoken to was this:— That there are some points of simple belief necessary to be explicitly believed, which yet are not contained in the Creed. Instead hereof you trouble yourself in vain to demonstrate, that many important points of faith are not contained in it, which yet Dr. Potter had freely granted, and you yourself take particular notice of his granting of it. All this pains therefore you have employed to no purpose; saving that to some negligent reader you may seem to have spoken to the very point, because that which you speak to, at the first hearing, sounds somewhat near it. But such a one I must intreat to remember, there be many more points of faith than there be articles of simple belief, necessary to be explicitly believed: and that though all of the former sort are not contained in the Creed, yet all of the latter sort may be. As for your distinction between heresies that have been, and heresies that are, and heresies that may be, I have already proved it vain; and that whatsoever may be a heresy, that is so; and whatsoever is so, that always hath been so, ever since the publication of the gospel of Christ. The doctrine of your church may like a snow-ball increase with rolling, and again, if you please, melt away and decrease: but as Christ Jesus, so his gospel, is yesterday, and to-day, and the same for ever.

38. Our Saviour sending his apostles to preach, gave them no other commission than this: "Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you." These were the bounds of their commission. If your church have any larger, or if she have a commission at large, to teach what she pleaseth, and call it the gospel of Christ, let her produce her letters patents from heaven for it. But if this be all you have, then must you give me leave to esteem it both great sacrilege in you to forbid any thing, be it never so small or ceremonious, which Christ hath commanded; as the receiving of the communion in both kinds: and as high a degree of presumption, to enjoin men to believe, that there are or can be any other fundamental articles of the gospel of Christ, than what Christ *himself* commanded his apostles to teach all men; *or* any *damnable heresies*, but such as are plainly repugnant to these prime verities.

39. Ad. §. 16, 17. The saying of the most learned prelate, and excellent man, the Archbishop of Armagh, is only related by Dr. Potter, p. 155. and not applauded: though the truth is, both the man deserves as much applause as any man, and his saying as much as any saying: it being as great and as good a truth, and as necessary for these miserable times, as possibly can be uttered. For this is most certain, and I believe you will easily grant it, that to reduce Christians to unity of communion, there are but two ways that may be conceived probable: the one, by taking away the diversity of opinions touching matters of religion; the other, by shewing that the diversity of opinions, which is among the several sects of Christians ought to be no hinderance to their unity in communion.

40. Now the former of these is not to be hoped for without a miracle, unless that could be done, which is impossible to be performed, though it be often pretended; that is, unless it could be made evident to all men, that God hath appointed some visible judge of controversies, to whose judgment all men are to submit themselves. What then remains, but that the other way must be taken, and Christians must be taught to set a higher value upon these high points of faith, and obedience wherein they agree, than upon these matters of less moment wherein they differ; and understand that agreement in those ought to be more effectual to join them in one communion, than their difference in other things of less moment to divide them? When I say, in one communion, I mean in a common profession of those articles of faith, wherein all consent: a joint worship of God, after such a way as all esteem lawful; and a mutual performance of all those works of charity, which Christians owe one to another. And to such a communion what better inducement could be

doubted word of God. And it is so certain that in all these books, all necessary doctrines are evidently contained, that of all the four evangelists this is very probable, but of St. Luke most apparent, that in every one of their books they have comprehended the whole substance of the gospel of Christ. For what reason can be imagined, that any of them should leave out any thing which he knew to be necessary, and yet (as apparently all of them have done) put in many things which they knew to be only profitable, and not necessary? What wise and honest man that were now to write the gospel of Christ, would do so great a work of God after such a negligent fashion? Suppose Xaverius had been to write the gospel of Christ for the Indians, think you he would have left out any fundamental doctrine of it? If not, I must beseech you to conceive as well of St. Matthew, and St. Mark, and St. Luke, and St. John, as you do of Xaverius. Besides, if every one of them have not in them all necessary doctrines, how have they complied with their own design, which was, as the titles of their books shew, to write the gospel of Christ, and not a part of it? Or how have they not deceived us, in giving them such titles? By the whole gospel of Christ I understand not the whole history of Christ, but all that makes up the covenant between God and man. Now if this be wholly contained in the Gospel of St. Mark, and St. John, I believe every considering man will be inclinable to believe, that then without doubt it is contained, with the advantage of many other profitable things, in the larger gospels of St. Matthew and St. Luke. And that St. Mark's Gospel wants no necessary article of this covenant, I pre-

sume you will not deny, if you believe Irenæus, when he says, "Matthew, to the Hebrews in their tongue published the scripture of the gospel: when Peter and Paul did preach the gospel, and found the church, or a church at Rome, or of Rome, and after their departure Mark, the scholar of Peter, delivered to us in writing those things which had been preached by Peter; and Luke, the follower of Paul, compiled in a book the gospel which was preached by him: and afterwards John, residing in Asia, in the city of Ephesus, did himself also set forth a gospel."

41. In which words of Irenæus, it is remarkable that they are spoken by him against some heretics, that pretended (as you know who do now-a-days) that—some necessary doctrines of the gospel were unwritten, and that out of the Scriptures truth (he must mean sufficient truth) cannot be found by those which know not tradition. Against whom to say, that part of the gospel, which was preached by Peter, was written by St. Mark, and some other necessary points of it omitted, had been to speak impertinently, and rather to confirm than confute their error. It is plain, therefore, that he must mean, as I pretend, that all the necessary doctrine of the gospel, which was preached by St. Peter, was written by St. Mark. Now you will not deny, I presume, that St. Peter preached all; therefore, you must not deny but St. Mark wrote all.

42. Our next inquiry, let it be touching St. John's intent in writing his Gospel, whether it were to deliver so much truth, as being believed and obeyed would certainly bring men to eternal life, or only part of it, and to leave part unwrit-

ten? A great man there is, but much less than the apostle, who saith, that "writing last, he purposed to supply the defects of the other evangelists that had wrote before him:" which, if it were true, would sufficiently justify what I have undertaken, that at least all the four evangelists have in them all the necessary parts of the gospel of Christ. Neither will I deny, but St. John's secondary intent might be to supply the defects of the former three gospels, in some things very profitable. But he that pretends, that any necessary doctrine is in St. John, which is in none of the other evangelists, hath not so considered them as he should do, before he pronounce sentence in so weighty a matter. And for his prime intent in writing his Gospel, what that was, certainly no father in the world understood it better than himself, therefore let us hear him speak: "Many other signs (saith he) also did Jesus in the sight of his disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in his name." By "these are written," may be understood, these things are written, or these signs are written. Take it which way you will, this conclusion will certainly follow; that either all that which St. John wrote in his Gospel, or less than all, and therefore all much more, was sufficient to make them believe that, which being believed with lively faith, would certainly bring them to eternal life.

43. This which hath been spoken, I hope, is enough to justify my undertaking to the full, that it is very probable that every one of the four

evangelists hath in his book the whole substance, all the necessary parts of the gospel of Christ. But for St. Luke, that he hath written such a perfect gospel, in my judgment, it ought to be with them that believe him no manner of question. Consider first the introduction to his Gospel, where he declares what he intends to write in these words: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed amongst us, even as they delivered unto us, which, from the beginning were eye-witnesses, and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of things from the first, to write to thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things wherein thou hast been instructed." Add to this place the entrance to his history of the Acts of the Apostles: "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which he was taken up." Weigh well these two places, and then answer me freely and ingenuously to these demands. 1. Whether St. Luke doth not undertake the very same thing which he says "many had taken in hand?" 2. Whether this were not "to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed amongst" Christians? 3. Whether the whole gospel of Christ, and every necessary doctrine of it, were not surely believed among Christians? 4. Whether they which were "eye-witnesses and ministers of the word from the beginning," delivered not the whole gospel of Christ? 5. Whether he doth not undertake to write in order these things,

whereof he had perfect understanding from the first? 6. Whether he had not perfect understanding of the whole gospel of Christ? 7. Whether he doth not undertake to write to Theophilus of all those things wherein he had been instructed? 8. And whether he had not been instructed in all the necessary parts of the gospel of Christ? 9. Whether, in the other text, "all things which Jesus began to do and teach," must not at least imply, all the principal and necessary things? 10. Whether this be not the very interpretation of your Rhemish doctors, in their annotation upon this place? 11. Whether all these articles of the Christian faith, without the belief whereof no man can be saved, be not the principal and most necessary things which Jesus taught? 12. And, lastly, Whether many things which St. Luke hath wrote in his Gospel be not less principal, and less necessary, than all and every one of these? When you have well considered these proposals, I believe you will be very apt to think (if St. Luke be of credit with you) that all things necessary to salvation are certainly contained in his writings alone. And from hence you will not choose but conclude, that seeing all the Christians in the world agree in the belief of what St. Luke hath written; and, not only so, but in all other books of canonical Scripture, which were never doubted of, in and by the church, the learned Archbishop had very just and certain ground to say, that "in these propositions, which, without controversy, are universally received in the whole Christian world so much truth is contained, as, being joined with holy obedience, may be sufficient to bring a man to everlasting salvation; and that we have

no cause to doubt, but that as many as walk according to this rule, neither overthrowing that which they have builded, by superinducing any damnable heresy thereupon, nor otherwise vitiating their holy faith, with a lewd and wicked conversation, peace shall be upon them, and upon the Israel of God."

44. Against this you object two things: the one, that by this rule, "seeing the doctrine of the Trinity is not received universally among Christians, the denial of it shall not exclude salvation." The other, "that the Bishop contradicts himself, in supposing a man may believe all necessary truths, and yet superinduce some damnable heresies."

45. To the first I answer, what I conceive he would, whose words I here justify, that he hath declared plainly in this very place, that he meant not an absolute, but a limited, universality, and speaks not of propositions universally believed by all professions of Christianity that are, but only by all those several professions of Christianity that have any large spread in any part of the world: by which words he excludes from the universality, here spoken of, the deniers of the doctrine of the Trinity, as being but a handful of men, in respect of all, nay, in respect of any of these professions which maintain it. And, therefore, it was a great fault in you, either willingly to conceal these words, which evacuate your objection, or else negligently to oversee them. Especially seeing your friend, to whom you are so much beholden, Paulus Veridicus, in his scurrilous and sophistical pamphlet against Bishop Usher's sermon, hath so kindly offered to lead you by the

hand to the observation of them, in these words: "To consider of your *coinopista*, or *communiter credenda*, articles, as you call them, universally believed of all these several professions of Christianity, which have any large spread in the world: these articles, for example, may be the unity of the Godhead, the Trinity of persons, immortality of the soul," &c. Where you see that your friend, whom you so much magnify, hath plainly confessed, that notwithstanding the Bishop's words, the denial of the doctrine of the Trinity may exclude salvation; and, therefore, in approving and applauding his answer to the Bishop's sermon, you have unawares allowed this answer of mine to your own greatest objection.

46. Now for the foul contradiction, which you say the Doctor might easily have espied in the Bishop's saying, he desires your pardon for his oversight, for Paulus Veridicus' sake; who, though he set himself to find fault with the Bishop's sermon, yet it seems this he could not find, or else, questionless, we should have heard it from him. And, therefore, if Dr. Potter, being the Bishop's friend, has not been more sharp-sighted than his enemies, this, he hopes, to indifferent judges will seem no unpardonable offence. Yet this, I say, not as if there were any contradiction at all, much less any foul contradiction, in the Bishop's words; but as Antipheron's picture, which he thought he saw in the air before him, was not in the air, but in his disturbed fancy; so all the contradiction, which here you descant upon, is not indeed in the Bishop's saying, but in your imagination: for wherein, I pray, lies this foul contradiction? "In supposing (say you) a man may believe all truths

necessary to salvation, and superinduce a damnable heresy." I answer, it is not certain that his words do suppose this; neither, if they do, doth he contradict himself. I say, it is not certain that his words import any such matter: for ordinarily men use to speak and write so, as here he doth, when they intend not to limit or restrain, but only to repeat, and press, and illustrate what they have said before. And I wonder why, with your eagle's eyes, you did not espy another foul contradiction in his words as well as this, and say, that he supposes a man may walk according to the rule of holy obedience, and yet vitiate his holy faith with a lewd and wicked conversation? Certainly, a lewd conversation is altogether as contradictious to holy obedience, as a damnable heresy to necessary truth. What then was the reason that you espied not this foul contradiction in his words as well as that? Was it because, according to the spirit and genius of your church, your zeal is greater to that which you conceive true doctrine than holy obedience; and think simple error a more capital crime, than sins committed against knowledge and conscience? Or was it because your reason told you, that herein he meant only to repeat and not to limit what he said before? And why then had you not so much candour to conceive that he might have the same meaning in the former part of the disjunction; and intend no more but this—whosoever walks according to this rule of believing all necessary truths, and holy obedience, (neither poisoning his faith of those truths which he holds with the mixture of any damnable heresy, nor vitiating it with a wicked life) peace shall be upon him! In which words

what man of any ingenuity will not presently perceive, that the words within the parenthesis, are only a repetition of, and no exception from, those that are without? St. Athanasius, in his Creed, tells us, "The catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity, neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance;" and why now do you not tell him that he contradicts himself, and supposes that we may worship a trinity of persons, and one God in substance, and yet confound the persons, or divide the substance; which yet is impossible, because three remaining three cannot be confounded, and one remaining one cannot be divided? If a man should say unto you, he that keeps all the commandments of God, committing no sin either against the love of God, or the love of his neighbour, is a perfect man: or thus, he that will live in constant health had need to be exact in his diet, neither eating too much nor too little: or thus, he that will come to London, must go on straight forward in such a way, and neither turn to the right hand nor to the left, I verily believe you would not find any contradiction in his words, but confess them as coherent and consonant as any in your book. And certainly, if you would look upon this saying of the Bishop with any indifference, you would easily perceive it to be of the very same kind, and capable of the very same construction. And, therefore, one of the grounds of your accusation is uncertain. Neither can you assure us, that the Bishop supposes any such matter as you pretend. Neither, if he did suppose this (as perhaps he did) were this to contradict himself: for though there can be no damn-

able heresy, unless it contradict some necessary truth, yet there is no contradiction but the same man may at once believe this heresy and this truth; because, there is no contradiction that the same man, at the same time, should believe contradictions. For, first, whatsoever a man believes true, that he may and must believe; but there have been some who have believed and taught that contradictions might be true, against whom Aristotle disputes in the third of his Metaphysics: therefore, it is not impossible that a man may believe contradictions. Secondly, They which believe there is no certainty in reason, must believe that contradictions may be true; for otherwise there will be certainty in this reason: this contradicts truth, therefore it is false. But there be now divers in the world, who believe there is no certainty in reason (and whether you be of their mind or no, I desire to be informed); therefore, there be divers in the world who believe contradictions may be true. Thirdly, They which do captivate their understandings to the belief of those things which to their understanding seem irreconcileable contradictions, may as well believe real contradictions; (for the difficulty of believing arises not from their being repugnant, but from their seeming to be so;) but you do captivate your understandings to the belief of those things which seem to your understandings irreconcileable contradictions; therefore, it is as possible and easy for you to believe those that indeed are so. Fourthly, Some men may be confuted in their errors, and persuaded out of them; but no man's error can be confuted, who, together with his error, doth not believe and grant some true prin-

ciple that contradicts his error: for nothing can be proved to him who grants nothing, neither can there be (as all men know) any rational discourse but out of grounds agreed on by both parties. Therefore, it is not impossible, but absolutely certain, that the same man at the same time may believe contradictions. Fifthly, It is evident, neither can you, without extreme madness and uncharitableness, deny that we believe the Bible; those books, I mean, which we account canonical? Otherwise, why dispute you with us out of them, as out of a common principle? Either, therefore, you must retract your opinion, and acknowledge that the same man at the same time may believe contradictions; or else, you will run into a greater inconvenience, and be forced to confess, that no part of our doctrine contradicts the Bible. Sixthly, I desire you to vindicate from contradiction these following assertions: that there should be length, and nothing long; breadth, and nothing broad; thickness, and nothing thick; whiteness, and nothing white; roundness, and nothing round; weight, and nothing heavy; sweetness, and nothing sweet; moisture, and nothing moist; fluidness, and nothing flowing; many actions, and no agent; many passions, and no patient; that is, that there should be a long, broad, thick, white, round, heavy, sweet, moist, flowing, active, passive, nothing! That bread should be turned into the substance of Christ, and yet not any thing of the bread become any thing of Christ; neither the matter, nor the form, nor the accidents of bread, be made either the matter, or form, or the accidents of Christ. That bread should be turned into nothing; and at the same time with the same

action turned into Christ, and yet Christ should not be nothing. That the same thing, at the same time, should have its just dimensions, and just distance of its parts one from another, and at the same time not have it, but all its parts together in one and the self-same point. That the body of Christ, which is much greater, should be contained wholly, and in its full dimensions, without any alteration, in that which is lesser; and that not once only, but as many times over as there are several points in the bread and wine. That the same thing, at the same time, should be wholly above itself, and wholly below itself, within itself, and without itself, on the right hand, and on the left hand, and round about itself. That the same thing, at the same time, should move to and from itself, and lie still; or, that it should be carried from one place to another through the middle space, and yet not move. That it should be brought from heaven to earth, and yet not come out of heaven, nor be at all in any of the middle spaces between heaven and earth. That to be one, should be to be undivided from itself, and yet that one and the same thing should be divided from itself. That a thing may be, and yet be no where; that a finite thing may be in all places at once. That a body may be in a place, and have there its dimensions, and colour, and all other qualities, and yet that it is not in the power of God to make it visible, and tangible there, nor capable of doing or suffering any thing. That there should be no certainty in our senses, and yet that we should know something certainly, and yet know nothing but by our senses. That that which is, and was long ago, should now begin to be.

That that is now to be made of nothing, which is not nothing but something: That the same thing should be before and after itself. That it should be truly and really in a place, and yet without locality. Nay, that he which is Omnipotent, should not be able to give it locality in this place, where it is, as some of you hold; or, if he can, as others say he can, that it should be possible that the same man, for example, you or I, may at the same time be awake at London, and not awake but asleep at Rome; there run or walk, here not run or walk, but stand still, sit, or lie along; there study or write, here do neither but dine or sup; there speak, here be silent. That he may in one place freeze with cold, in another burn with heat. That he may be drunk in one place, and sober in another; valiant in one place, and a coward in another; a thief in one place, and honest in another. That he may be a papist, and go to mass in Rome; a protestant, and go to church in England. That he may die in Rome and live in England; or, dying in both places, may go to hell from Rome, and to heaven from England. That the body and soul of Christ should cease to be where it was, and yet not go to another place, nor be destroyed. All these and many other of the like nature are the unavoidable, and most of them the acknowledged, consequences of your doctrine of transubstantiation, as it is explained one way or other by your schoolmen. Now I beseech you, Sir, to try your skill; and, if you can, compose their repugnance, and make peace between them, certainly none but you shall be catholic moderator. But, if you cannot do it, and that after an

action turned into Christ, and yet Christ should not be nothing. That the same thing, at the same time, should have its just dimensions, and just distance of its parts one from another, and at the same time not have it, but all its parts together in one and the self-same point. That the body of Christ, which is much greater, should be contained wholly, and in its full dimensions, without any alteration, in that which is lesser; and that not once only, but as many times over as there are several points in the bread and wine. That the same thing, at the same time, should be wholly above itself, and wholly below itself, within itself, and without itself, on the right hand, and on the left hand, and round about itself. That the same thing, at the same time, should move to and from itself, and lie still; or, that it should be carried from one place to another through the middle space, and yet not move. That it should be brought from heaven to earth, and yet not come out of heaven, nor be at all in any of the middle spaces between heaven and earth. That to be

them: for men, in such cases, easily to swallow and digest contradictions, he that denies it possible must be a mere stranger in the world.

48. Ad. §. 18. This paragraph consists of two immodest untruths, obtruded upon us without shew or shadow of reason: and an evident sophism, grounded upon an affected mistake of the sense of the word fundamental.

49. The first untruth is, that "Dr. Potter makes a church, of men agreeing scarcely in one point of faith: of men concurring in some one or few articles of belief, and in the rest holding conceits plainly contradictory: agreeing only in this one article, that Christ is our Saviour; but, for the rest, like to the parts of a chimera," &c. which I say is a shameless calumny, not only because Dr. Potter in this point delivers not his own judgment, but relates the opinion of others, Mr. Hooker and Mr. Merton; but, especially, because even these men (as they are related by Dr. Potter) to the constituting the very essence of a church in the lowest degree, require not only faith in Christ Jesus, the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, but also submission to his doctrine in mind and will. Now I beseech you, Sir, tell me ingenuously, whether the doctrine of Christ may be called without blasphemy scarcely one point of faith? Or whether it consists only of some one or few articles of belief? Or whether there be nothing in it, but only this article, that Christ is our Saviour? Is it not manifest to all the world, that Christians of all professions do agree with one consent in the belief of all those books of Scripture, which were not doubted of in the ancient church, without danger of damnation? Nay, is it not apparent that no

intelligible manner, then you must give me leave to believe, that either you do not believe transubstantiation, or else, that it is no contradiction, that men should subjugate their understandings to the belief of contradictions.

47. Lastly, I pray tell me whether you have not so much charity in store for the Bishop of Armagh, and Dr. Potter, as to think that they themselves believe this saying which the one preached and printed, the other reprinted, and as you say applauded? If you think they do, then certainly you have done unadvisedly, either with charging it with a foul contradiction, or in saying, it is impossible that any man should at once believe contradictions. Indeed, that men should not assent to contradictions, and that it is unreasonable to do so, I willingly grant: but to say, it is impossible to be done, is against every man's experience, and almost as unreasonable, as to do the thing which is said to be impossible: for though perhaps it may be very difficult for a man in his right wits to believe a contradiction expressed in terms, especially if he believe it to be a contradiction; yet for men, being cowed and awed by superstition, to persuade themselves upon slight and trivial grounds, that these or these, though they seem contradictions, yet indeed are not so, and so to believe them: or, if the plain repugnance of them be veiled or disguised a little with some empty unintelligible nonsense distinction; or if it be not expressed but implied, not direct but by consequence, so that the parties, to whose faith the propositions are offered, are either innocently, or perhaps affectedly, ignorant of the contrariety of

them: for men, in such cases, easily to swallow and digest contradictions, he that denies it possible must be a mere stranger in the world.

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49. The first untruth is, that "Dr. Potter makes a church, of men agreeing scarcely in one point of faith: of men concurring in some one or few articles of belief, and in the rest holding conceits plainly contradictory: agreeing only in this one article, that Christ is our Saviour; but, for the rest, like to the parts of a chimera," &c. which I say is a shameless calumny, not only because Dr. Potter in this point delivers not his own judgment, but relates the opinion of others, Mr. Hooker and Mr. Merton; but, especially, because even these men (as they are related by Dr. Potter) to the constituting the very essence of a church in the lowest degree, require not only faith in Christ Jesus, the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, but also submission to his doctrine in mind and will. Now I beseech you, Sir, tell me ingenuously, whether the doctrine of Christ may be called without blasphemy scarcely one point of faith? Or whether it consists only of some one or few articles of belief? Or whether there be nothing in it, but only this article, that Christ is our Saviour? Is it not manifest to all the world, that Christians of all professions do agree with one consent in the belief of all those books of Scripture, which were not doubted of in the ancient church, without danger of damnation? Nay, is it not apparent that no

man, at this time, can without hypocrisy pretend to believe in Christ, but of necessity he must do so? Seeing he can have no reason to believe in Christ, but he must have the same to believe the Scripture. I pray then read over the Scripture once more, or, if that be too much labour, the New Testament only; and then say, whether there be nothing there, but "scarcely one point of faith? But some one or two articles of belief? Nothing but this article only, that Christ is our Saviour?" Say, whether there be not there an infinite number of Divine verities, Divine precepts, Divine promises, and those so plainly and undoubtedly delivered, that if any sees them not, it cannot be because he cannot, but because he will not! So plainly, that whosoever submits sincerely to the doctrine of Christ, in mind and will, cannot possibly but submit to these in act and performance. And in the rest, which it hath pleased God, for reasons best known to himself, to deliver obscurely or ambiguously, yet thus far at least they agree, that the sense of them intended by God is certainly true, and that they are without passion or prejudice to endeavour to find it out: the difference only is, which is that true sense which God intended. Neither would this long continue, if the walls of separation, whereby the devil hopes to make their divisions eternal, were pulled down; and error were not supported against truth by human advantages. But, for the present, God forbid the matter should be so ill as you make it! For whereas you looking upon their points of difference and agreement, through I know not what strange glasses have made the first innumerable, and the other scarce a number: the truth is clean

contrary; that those Divine verities, speculative and practical, wherein they universally agree, (which you will have to be but a few, or but one, or scarcely one) amount to many millions (if an exact account were taken of them): and, on the other side, the points in variance are in comparison but few, and those not of such a quality, but the error in them may well consist with the belief and obedience of the entire covenant, ratified by Christ between God and man. Yet I would not be so mistaken, as if I thought the errors even of some protestants inconsiderable things, and matters of no moment. For the truth is, I am very fearful that some of their opinions, either as they are, or as they are apt to be mistaken, (though not of themselves so damnable,) but that good and holy men may be saved with them, yet, are too frequent occasions of our remissness, and slackness, in running the race of Christian perfection, of our deferring repentance and conversion to God, of our frequent relapses into sin, and not seldom of security in sinning; and, consequently, though not certain causes, yet too frequent occasions of many men's damnation: and such I conceive all these doctrines, which either directly or obliquely put men in hopes of eternal happiness by any other means, saving only the narrow way of sincere and universal obedience, grounded upon a true and lively faith. These errors, therefore, I do not elevate or extenuate: and, on condition the ruptures made by them might be composed, do heartily wish, that the cement were made of my dearest blood, and only not to be an anathema from Christ: only this is I say, that neither are their points of agreement so few, nor their

differences so many as you make them; nor so great as to exclude the opposite parties from being members of the church militant, and joint-heirs of the glory of the church triumphant.

50. Your other palpable untruth is, that "protestants are far more bold to disagree, even in matters of faith, than catholic divines (you mean your own) in questions only merely philosophical, or not determined by the church." For neither do they differ at all in matters of faith, if you take the word in the highest sense, and mean by matters of faith, such doctrines as are absolutely necessary to salvation to be believed, or not to be disbelieved. And then in those wherein they do differ, with what colour or shadow of argument can you make good, that they are more bold to disagree, than you are in questions merely philosophical, or not determined by the church? For is there not as great repugnancy between your assent and dissent, your affirmation and negation, your *est est*, *non non*, as there is between theirs? You follow your reason in those things which are not determined by your church; and they theirs, in things not plainly determined in Scripture. And wherein then consists their greater, their far greater boldness? And what if they, in their contradictory opinions, pretend both to rely upon the truth of God, doth this make their contradictions every a wit the more repugnant: I had always thought that all contradictions had been equally contradictions, and equally repugnant; because the least of them are as far asunder as *est* and *non est* can make them, and the greatest are no farther. But then you in your differences (by name, about predetermination, the immaculate conception, the

pope's infallibility) upon what other motive do you rely? Do not you cite Scripture or tradition, or both, on both sides? And do you not pretend, that both these are the infallible truths of Almighty God?

51. You close up this section with a fallacy, proving forsooth, that—we destroy, by our confession, the church which is the house of God, because we stand only upon fundamental articles, which cannot make up the whole fabric of the faith, no more than the foundation of a house alone can be a house.

52. But I hope, Sir, that you will not be difficult in granting, that that is a house which hath all the necessary parts belonging to a house: now by fundamental articles, we mean all those which are necessary. And you yourself, in the very leaf after this, take notice that Dr. Potter doth so: Where to this question, how shall I know in particular which points be, and which be not fundamental? you scurrilously bring him in making this ridiculous answer, "read my answer to a late pamphlet intitled Charity Mistaken, &c. There you shall find that fundamental doctrines, are such catholic verities, as principally and essentially pertain to the faith, such as properly constitute a church, and are necessary (in ordinary course) to be distinctly believed by every Christian that will be saved." All which words he used, not to tell you what points be fundamental, as you dishonestly impose upon him, but to explain what he meant by the word fundamental. May it please you therefore now at last to take notice, that by fundamental we mean all and only that which is necessary; and then I hope you will grant, that we may safely expect salvation in a church which

hath all things fundamental to salvation. Unless you will say, that more is necessary than that which is necessary.

53. Ad. §. 19. This long discourse, so full of uningenuous dealing with your adversary, perhaps would have done reasonably well in a farce or a comedy, and I doubt not but you have made yourself, and your courteous readers, good sport with it. But if Dr. Potter, or I, had been by when you wrote it, we should have stopped your career at the first starting, and have put you in mind of these old school proverbs, *Ex falso supposito sequitur quodlibet*, and, *Uno absurdo dato, sequuntur mille.* For whereas you suppose, first, that to a man desirous to save his soul, and inquiring whose direction he might rely upon? the Doctor's answer would be—upon the true catholic church; I suppose, upon better reason, because I know his mind, that he would advise him to call no man master on earth, but, according to Christ's command, to rely upon the direction of God himself. If he should inquire, where he should find this direction? He would answer him—in his word contained in Scripture. If he should inquire what assurance he might have, that the Scripture is the word of God? he would answer him—that the doctrine itself is very fit and worthy to be thought to come from God, *nec vox hominem sonat*, and that they which wrote and delivered it, confirmed it to be the word of God, by doing such works as could not be done but by power from God himself. For assurance of the truth hereof he would advise him to rely upon that which all wise men in all matters of belief rely upon; and that is the consent of ancient records and universal tradition. And that he might not

mistrust him as partial in this advice, he might farther tell him, that a gentleman that would be nameless, that hath written a book against him, called Charity Maintained by Catholics, though in many things he differ from him, yet agrees with him in this—that tradition is such a principle as may be rested in, and which requires no other proof. As, indeed, no wise man doubts but there was such a man as Julius Cæsar, or Cicero, that there are such cities as Rome, or Constantinople, though he have no other assurance for the one or the other, but only the speech of people. This tradition, therefore, he would counsel him to rely upon, and to believe that the book which we call Scripture, was confirmed abundantly by the works of God to be the word of God. Believing it the word of God, he must of necessity believe it true: and if he believe it true, he must believe it contains all necessary direction to eternal happiness, because it affirms itself to do so. Nay, he might tell him that so far is the whole book from wanting any necessary direction to his eternal salvation, that one only author, that hath writ two little books of it, St. Luke by name, in the beginning of his Gospel, and in the beginning of his story, shews plainly that he alone hath written at least so much as is necessary. And what they wrote, they wrote by God's direction for the direction of the world, not only for the learned, but for all that would do their true endeavour to know the will of God, and to do it; therefore you cannot but conceive, that writing to all, and for all, they wrote so as that in things necessary they might be understood by all. Besides that, here he should find, that God himself has engaged himself

by promise, that if he would love him and keep his commandments, and pray earnestly for his Spirit, and be willing to be directed by it, he should undoubtedly receive it, even the Spirit of truth, which shall lead him into all truth; that is certainly, at least, into all necessary truth, and suffer him to fall into no pernicious error. The sum of his whole direction to him briefly would be this: Believe the Scripture to be the word of God, use your true endeavour to find the true sense of it, and to live according to it, and then you may rest securely that you are in the true way of eternal happiness. This is the substance of that answer which the Doctor would make to any man in this case: and this is a way so plain, that fools, unless they will, cannot err from it. Because, not knowing absolutely all truth, nay, not all profitable truth, and being free from error: but endeavouring to know the truth and obey it, and endeavouring to be free from error, is by this way made the only condition of salvation. As for your supposition, that he would advise such a man to rely upon the catholic church for finding out the doctrine of Christ; he utterly disclaims it, and truly very justly: there being no certain way to know that any company is a true church, but only by their professing the true doctrine of Christ. And therefore as it is impossible that I should know that such a company of philosophers are peripatetics, or stoics, unless I first know what the doctrine of the peripatetics, and stoics; so it is as impossible that I should certainly know any company to be the church of Christ, before I know what is the doctrine of Christ, the profession whereof constitutes the visible church, the belief

and obedience the invisible. And, therefore, whereas you would have him directed by the catholic church to the doctrine of Christ; the contrary rather is most certain and necessary, that by the foreknowledge of the doctrine of Christ, he must be directed to a certain assurance,* which is the catholic church, if he mean not to choose at a venture, but desire to have certain direction to it. This supposition, therefore, being the hinge whereon your whole discourse turns, is the Minerva of your own brain; and, therefore, were it but for this, have we not great reason to accuse you of strange immodesty, in saying, as you do, that the whole discourse and inferences, which here you have made, are either Dr. Potter's own direct assertions, or evident consequences clearly deduced from them? Especially, seeing your proceeding in it is so consonant to this ill beginning, that it is in a manner wholly made up, not of Dr. Potter's assertions, but your own fictions obtruded on him.

54. To the next question—cannot general councils err? You pretend, he answers,†—they may err damnably. Let the reader see the place, and he shall find *damnably* is your addition. To the third demand, "must I consult (about my difficulties) with every particular person of the catholic church?" you answer for him, (that which is most false) that "it seems so by his words; the whole militant church; that is, all the members of it cannot possibly err either in the whole faith, or any necessary article of it:" which is very certain, for should it so do, it should be the church no longer. But what sense is there that you

* Which is the church. † Answers, §. 19. Lond.

should collect out of these words, that every member of the militant church must be consulted with? By like reason, if he had said that all men in the world cannot err; if he said that God in his own person, or his angels could not err in these matters, you might have gathered from thence, that he laid a necessity upon men in doubt, to consult with angels, or with God in his own person, or with all men in the world. Is it not evident to all sober men, that to make any man or men fit to be consulted with, besides the understanding of the matter, it is absolutely requisite that they may be spoken with? And is it not apparently impossible, that any man should speak with all the members of the militant church? Or if he had spoken with them all, know that he had done so? Nay, does not Dr. Potter say as much in plain terms? Nay more, do not you take notice that he does so in the very next words before these, where you say, "he affirms that the catholic church cannot be told of private injuries:" unless you will persuade us there is a difference between the catholic church and the whole militant church. For whereas you make him deny this of the catholic church united, and affirm it of the militant church dispersed into particulars: the truth is, he speaks neither of united nor dispersed, but affirms simply (as appears to your shame, by your own quotations) that "the catholic church cannot be told of private injuries:" and then, that the whole militant church cannot err. But then, besides that the united church cannot be consulted, and the dispersed may; what a wild imagination is it, and what a strange injustice was it in you to father it upon him? I beseech you, Sir, to consider seriously, how far blind zeal to your superstition hath

transported you beyond all bounds of honesty and discretion, and made you careless of speaking either truth or sense, so you speak against Dr. Potter?

55. Again you make him say, "the prelates of God's church meeting in a lawful council may err damnably:" and from this you collect, "it remains then, for your necessary instruction you must repair to every particular member of the universal church spread over the face of the earth." And this is also *Pergula pictoris, veri nihil, omnia ficta.* The antecedent false, (not for the matter of it, but) that Dr. Potter says it. And the consequence as far from it as Gades from Ganges; and as coherent as a rope of sand. A general council may err; therefore you must travel all the world over, and consult with every particular Christian! As if there were nothing else to be consulted with: nay, as if according to the doctrine of protestants (for so you must say), there was nothing to be consulted with, but only a general council, or all the world! Have you never heard that protestants say, that men for their direction must consult with Scripture? Nay, doth not Dr. Potter say it often in this very book which you are confuting? Nay more, in this very page out of which you take this piece of your cento, "a general council may err damnably," are there not these plain words: "in searchers of truth (he means Divine truth) God ever directs us to the infallible rule of truth, the Scripture?" With what conscience, then, or modesty, can you impose upon him this unreasonable consequence, and yet pretend that your whole discourse is either his own direct assertions, or evident consequences, clearly deduced from them? You add, that yet he teaches (as if he contradicted

himself) that " the promises of God made to the church for his assistance, are not intended to particular persons, but only to the catholic church:" which sure agrees very well with any thing said by Dr. Potter. If it be repugnant to what you said for him falsely, what is that to him?

56. Neither yet is this to drive any man to desperation: unless it be such an one, as hath such a strong affection to this word *church*, that he will not go to heaven, unless he hath a church to lead him thither. For what though a council may err, and the whole church cannot be consulted with, yet this is not to send you on the fool's pilgrimage for faith, and bid you go and " confer with every Christian soul, man and woman, by sea and by land, close prisoner or at liberty," as you dilate the matter: but to tell you very briefly, that universal tradition directs you to the word of God, and the word of God directs you to heaven. And therefore here is no cause of desperation, no cause for you to be so vain, and tragical, as here you would seem. " Yet upon supposal (you say) of this miraculous pilgrimage for faith, before I have the faith of miracles, how shall I proceed at our meeting? Or how shall I know the man, on whom I may securely rely?" And hereunto you frame this answer for the Doctor: " procure to know whether he believe all fundamental points of faith:" whereas, in all the Doctor's book, there is no such answer to any such question, or any like it. Neither do you, as your custom is, note any page where it may be found; which makes me suspect, that sure you have some private license to use heretics (as you call them) at your pleasure, and make them answer any thing to any thing.

57. Wherein I am yet more confirmed by the answer you put in his mouth to your next demand: "How shall I know whether he hold all fundamental points or no?" For whereas hereunto Dr. Potter, having given one answer fully satisfactory to it, which is: "If he truly believe the undoubted books of canonical Scripture, he cannot but believe all fundamentals:" and another, which is but something towards a full satisfaction of it, that "the Creed contains all the fundamentals of simple belief:" you take no notice of the former, and pervert the latter, and make him say—the Creed contains all fundamentals of faith. Whereas you know, and, within six or seven lines after this, confess that he never pretended it to contain all simply, but all of one sort, all necessary points of simple belief. Which assertion, because he modestly delivers as very probable (being willing to conclude rather less than more than his reasons require) hereupon you take occasion to ask, "shall I hazard my soul on probabilities, or even wagers?" As if whatsoever is but probable, though in the highest degree of probability, were as likely to be false as true! Or, because it is but morally, not mathematically, certain, that there was such a woman as Queen Elizabeth, such a man as Henry VIII. that is, in the highest degree probable, therefore it were an even wager there were none such! By this reason, seeing the truth of your whole religion depends finally upon prudential motives, which you do but pretend to be very credible, it will be an even wager that your religion is false. And, by the same reason, or rather infinitely greater, seeing it is impossible for any man (according to the grounds of your religion) to know

himself, much less another, to be a true pope, or a true priest; nay, to have a moral certainty of it; because these things are obnoxious to innumerable secret and undiscernible nullities, it will be an even wager, nay, (if we proportion things indifferently), a hundred to one, that every consecration and absolution of yours is void, and that whensoever you adore the host, you and your assistants commit idolatry: that there is a nullity in any decree that a pope shall make, or any decree of a council which he shall confirm: particularly, it will be at least an even wager, that all the decrees of the council of Trent are void, because it is at most but very probable that the pope which confirmed them was true pope. If you mislike these inferences, then confess you have injured Dr. Potter in this also, that you have confounded, and made all one, probabilities, and even wagers. Whereas every ordinary gamester can inform you, that though it be a thousand to one that such a thing will happen, yet it is not sure, but very probable.

58. To make the measure of your injustice yet fuller, you demand, "If the Creed contains only points of simple belief, how shall we know what points of belief are necessary which direct our practice?" Dr. Potter would have answered you in our Saviour's words, "Search the Scriptures." But you have a great mind, it seems, to be despairing; and, therefore, having proposed your questions, will not suffer him to give you an answer, but shut your ears and tell him, "still he chalks out new paths for desperation."

59. In the rest of your interlude, I cannot but commend one thing in you, that you keep a de-

corum, and observe very well the rule given you by the great master of your art,

———Servetur ad imum
Qualis ab incepto processerat, et sibi constet:

one vein of scurrility and dishonesty runs clean through it, from the beginning to the end. Your next demand then is, " Are all the articles of the Creed for their nature and matter fundamental?" And the answer, " I cannot say so." Which answer (though it be true) Dr. Potter no where gives it, neither hath he occasion, but you make it for him, to bring in another question, and that is, " How then shall I know, which in particular be, and which be not, fundamental?" Dr. Potter would have answered, It is a vain question: believe all, and you shall be sure to believe all that is fundamental.

60. But what says now his prevaricating proxy? What does he make him say? This which follows: " Read my Answer to a late popish pamphlet, entitled, Charity Mistaken: there you shall find that fundamental doctrines are such catholic verities, as principally and essentially pertain to the faith, such as properly constitute a church, and are necessary, in ordinary course, to be distinctly believed by every Christian that will be saved. They are those grand and capital doctrines which make up our faith, that is, the common faith, which is alike precious in all; being one and the same, in the highest apostle and the meanest believer, which the apostle elsewhere calls, 'the first principles of the oracles of God, and the form of sound words.'"

61. But in earnest, good Sir, doth the Doctor,

in these places by you quoted, make to this question this same sottish answer? Or do you think that against a heretic nothing is unlawful? Certainly, if he doth answer thus, I will make bold to say, he is a very fool. But, if he does not, (as indeed he does not) then—: but I forbear you, and beseech the reader to consult the places of Dr. Potter's book; and there he shall find, that, in the former half of these (as you call them) varied words and phrases, he declared only what he means by the word *fundamental*, which was needful to prevent mistakes, and cavilling about the meaning of the word, which is metaphorical, and therefore ambiguous; and that the latter half of them are several places of Scripture employed by Dr. Potter, to shew that his distinction of fundamental and not fundamental hath express ground in it. Now of these two places, very pertinent unto two very good purposes, you have exceeding fairly patched together a most ridiculous answer to a question, that Dr. Potter never dreamed of. But the words you will say are in Dr. Potter's book, though in divers places, and to other purposes. Very true! And so the words of Ausonius's obscene Fescennine are taken out of Virgil, yet Virgil surely was not the author of this poem. Besides, in Dr. Potter's book there are these words: "Dread Sovereign, amongst the many excellent virtues, which have made your Majesty's person so dear unto God," &c. And why now may not you say as well, that in these he made answer to your former question, what points of the Creed were, and what were not, fundamentals?

62. But—unless this question may be answered, his doctrine (you say) serves only either to make

men despair, or else to have recourse to these whom we call papists.—It seems a little thing will make you despair, if you be so sullen as to do so, because men will not trouble themselves to satisfy your curious questions. And I pray be not offended with me for so esteeming it, because, as I before told you, if you will believe all the points of the Creed, you cannot choose but believe all the points of it that are fundamental, though you be ignorant which are so, and which are not so. Now, I believe, your desire to know which are fundamentals, proceeds only from a desire to be assured that you do believe them; which, seeing you may be assured of, without knowing which they be, what can it be but curiosity to desire to know it? Neither may you think to mend yourself herein one whit by having recourse to them whom we call papists; for they are as far to seek as we in this point, which of the articles of the Creed are, for their nature and matter, fundamental, and which are not. Particularly you will scarce meet with any amongst their doctors, so adventurous as to tell you for a certain, whether or no the conception of Christ by the Holy Ghost, his being born of a Virgin, his burial, his descent in hell, and the communion of saints, be points of their own nature and matter fundamental. Such, I mean, as without the distinct and explicit knowledge of them no man can be saved.

63. But you will say—at least they give this certain rule, that all points defined by Christ's visible church, belong to the foundation of faith, in such sense, as to deny any such, cannot stand with salvation.—So also protestants give you this

more certain rule, that whosoever believes heartily those books of Scripture, which all the Christian churches in the world acknowledge to be canonical, and submits himself indeed to this, as to the rule of his belief, must of necessity believe all things fundamental; and if he live according to his faith, cannot fail of salvation: but, besides, what certainty have you that the rule of papists is so certain? By the visible church it is plain, they mean only their own: and why their own only should be the visible church, I do not understand: and as little why all points defined by this church should belong to the foundation of faith. These things you had need see well and substantially proved, before you rely upon them, otherwise you expose yourself to danger of embracing damnable errors instead of fundamental truths. But you will say, Dr. Potter himself acknowledges, that you do not err in fundamentals. If he did so, yet methinks you have no reason to rest upon his acknowledgment with any security, whom you condemn of error in many other matters. Perhaps, excess of charity to your persons, may make him censure your errors more favourably than he should do. But the truth is, and so I have often told you, though the Doctor hopes that your errors are not so unpardonably destructive, but that some men who ignorantly hold them may be saved, yet, in themselves, he professes and proclaims them damnable, and such as, he fears, will be certainly destructive to such as you are; that is, to all those who have eyes to see, and will not see.

64. Ad. §. 20—23. In the remainder of this chapter, you promise to answer Dr. Potter's ar-

guments against that which you said before. But, presently forgetting yourself, instead of answering his arguments, you fall a confuting his answers to your own. The arguments objected by you, which here you vindicate, were two: 1. "The Scripture is not so much as mentioned in the Creed, therefore the Creed contains not all things necessary to be believed. Baptism is not contained in the Creed, therefore not all things necessary." To both which arguments, my answer shortly is this—that they prove something, but it is that which no man here denies. For Dr. Potter (as you have also confessed) never said, nor undertook to shew, that the apostles intended to comprise in the Creed all points absolutely, which we are bound to believe, or, after sufficient proposal, not to disbelieve; which yet here, and every where, you are obtruding upon him: but only that they purposed to comprise in it all such doctrines purely speculative, all such matters of simple belief, as are, in ordinary course, necessary to be distinctly and explicitly believed by all men: now neither of these objections do any way infringe or impeach the truth of this assertion. Not the first, because, according to your own doctrine, all men are not bound to know explicitly what books of Scripture are canonical. Nor the second, because baptism is not a matter of faith, but practice: not so much to be believed, as to be given and received. And against these answers, whether you have brought any considerable new matter, let the indifferent reader judge. As for the other things, which Dr. Potter rather glanceth at, than builds upon, in answering these objections, as the Creed's being collected out of Scripture; and,

the church of after ages make the narrow way to heaven narrower than our Saviour left it? Shall it be a fault to straiten and encumber the king's highway with public nuisances? And is it lawful, by adding new articles to the faith, to retrench any thing from the latitude of the King of heaven's highway to eternal happiness? The yoke of Christ, which he said was easy, may it be justly made heavier by the governors of the church in after ages? The apostles profess they revealed to the church the whole counsel of God, keeping back nothing needful for our salvation; what tyranny, then, to impose any new unnecessary matters on the faith of Christians, especially (as the late popes have done) under the high commanding form, *qui non crediderit, damnabitur*. If this may be done, why then did our Saviour reprehend the pharisees so sharply for binding heavy burdens, and laying them on men's shoulders? And why did he teach them, that in vain they worshipped God, teaching for doctrines men's traditions? And why did the apostles call it tempting of God, to lay those things upon the necks of Christians that were not necessary?"

68. All which interrogations seem to me to contain so many plain and convincing arguments of the premised assertion; to all which (one excepted) according to the advice of the best masters of rhetoric in such cases, you have answered very discreetly by saying 0. But when you write again, I pray take notice of them; and, if you can devise no fair and satisfying answer to them, then be so ingenuous as to grant the conclusion, that no more can be necessary for Christians to believe now, than was in the apostles' time. A conclusion

of great importance, for the decision of many controversies, and the disburdening of the faith of Christ from many incumbrances.

69. As for that one, which you thought you could fasten upon, grounded on the xx. Act. 27. let me tell you plainly, that, by your answering this, you have shewed plainly that it was wisely done of you to decline the rest. You tell Dr. Potter, that needful for salvation is his gloss, which, perhaps, you intended for a piece of an answer. But, good Sir, consult the place, and you shall find that there St. Paul himself says, that he kept back οὐδὲν τῶν συμφερόντων, "not any thing that was profitable:" and, I hope, you will make no difficulty to grant that whatsoever is needful for salvation is very profitable.

70. But then, you say—this is no proof unless he beg the question, and suppose that whatsoever the apostle revealed to the church is contained in the Creed.—I answer, it is not Dr. Potter that begs the question, but you that mistake it; which is not here in this particular place, whether all points of simple belief necessary for the salvation of the primitive Christians, were contained in the apostles' symbol? (for that and the proofs of it follow after, in the next §. p. 223. of Dr. Potter's book:) but, whether any thing can be necessary for Christians to believe now, which was not so from the beginning? Dr. Potter maintains the negative; and, to make good his opinion, thus he argues: St. Paul declared to the Ephesians the whole counsel of God, touching their salvation; therefore that which St. Paul did not declare can be no part of the counsel of God, and therefore not necessary. And, again: St. Paul kept back

nothing from the Ephesians that was profitable; therefore he taught them all things necessary to salvation. Consider this, I pray, a little better, and then I hope you will acknowledge, that here was no *petitio principii* in Dr. Potter; but rather *ignoratio elenchi* in you.

71. Neither is it material that these words were particularly directed by St. Paul to the pastors of the church: for (to say nothing that the point here issuable, is not, whom he taught, whether priests or laymen? but how much he taught, and whether all things necessary?) it appears plainly out of the text, and I wonder you should read it so negligently, as not to observe it, that though he speaks now to the pastors, yet he speaks of what he taught not only them, but also the laity as well as them. "I have kept back nothing," says St. Paul, "that was profitable, but have shewed, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house testifying (I pray observe) both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." And a little after, "I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more: wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am innocent from the blood of all men; for I have kept nothing back, but have shewed you all the counsel of God." And again, "remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." Certainly, though he did all things to the pastors among the rest, nay, above the rest, yet, without controversy, they whom he taught publicly, and from house to house: the Jews and Greeks to whom he testified, *i. e.* preached faith and re-

pentance: those all, among whom he went preaching the kingdom of God: those every one, whom for the three years together he warned, were not bishops and pastors only.

72. Neither is this to say, that the apostles taught Christians nothing but their Creed, nothing of the sacraments, commandments, &c. for that is not here the point to be proved; but only, that they taught them all things necessary, so that nothing can be necessary which they did not teach them. But how much of this they put into their Creed, whether all the necessary points of simple belief, as we pretend, or only as you say, I know not what, is another question, and which comes now to be farther examined. Dr. Potter, in confirmation of it, besides the authorities which you formerly shifted off with so egregious tergiversation, urges five several arguments.

73. We urge against you—that if all necessary points of simple belief be not comprised in the Creed, it can no way deserve the name of the Apostles' Creed, as not being their Creed in any sense, but only a part of it.—To this you answer, §. 25. "Upon the same affected ambiguity," &c. *Ans.* It is very true that their whole faith was of a larger extent, but that was not the question: but whether all the points of simple belief which they taught as necessary to be explicitly believed, be not contained in it? And if thus much at least of Christian religion be not comprised in it, I again desire you to inform me, how it could be called the Apostles' Creed?

74. Four other reasons Dr. Potter urges to the same purpose, grounded upon the practice of the ancient church; the last whereof you answer in

the second part of your book. But to the rest, drawn from the ancient churches appointing her infants to be instructed (for matter of simple belief,) only in the Creed: from her admitting catechumens unto baptism: and of strangers to her communion upon their only profession of the Creed, you have not, for aught I can perceive, thought fit to make any kind of answer.

75. The difficulties of the 27th and last §. of this chapter, have been satisfied, so that there remains unexamined only the 26th §. wherein you exceed yourself in sophistry: especially, in that trick of cavillers, which is to answer objections by other objections; an excellent way to make controversies endless! Dr. Potter desires to be resolved—why, amongst many things of equal necessity to be believed, the apostles should distinctly set down some in the Creed, and be altogether silent of others?—instead of resolving him in this difficulty, you put another to him, and that is—why are some points not fundamental expressed in it, rather than others of the same quality?—Which demand is so far from satisfying the former doubt, that it makes it more intricate. For upon this ground it may be demanded—how was it possible that the apostles should leave out any articles simply necessary, and put in others not necessary, especially if their intention were (as you say it was) to deliver in it such articles as were fittest for those times? Unless (which were wondrous strange) unnecessary articles were fitter for those times than necessary. But now to your question, the answer is obvious: these unnecessary things might be put in, because they were circumstances of the necessary; Pontius Pilate,

of Christ's passion; the third day of the resurrection. Neither doth the adding of them make the Creed ever a whit the less portable, the less fit to be understood and remembered. And for the contrary reasons, other unnecessary things might be left out. Besides, who sees not that the addition of some unnecessary circumstances is a thing that can hardly be avoided without affectation: and therefore not so great a fault, nor deserving such a censure, as the omission of any thing essential to the work undertaken, and necessary to the end proposed in it.

76. You demand again (as it is no hard matter to multiply demands) "why our Saviour's descent to hell, and burial, was expressed, and not his circumcision, his manifestation to the three kings, and working of miracles?" I answer: his resurrection, ascension, and sitting at the right hand of God are very great miracles, and they are expressed. Besides, St. John assures us, that the miracles which Christ did, were done and written not for themselves, that they might be believed; but for a further end, that we might believe that Jesus was the Christ, and believing have eternal life. He therefore that believes this may be saved, though he have no explicit and distinct faith of any miracle that our Saviour did. His circumcision and manifestation to the wise men, (for I know not upon what grounds you call them kings) are neither things simply necessary to be known, nor have any near relation to those that are so. As for his descent into hell, it may (for aught you know) be put in as a thing necessary of itself to be known. If you ask, why more than his circumcision? I refer you to the apostles for an an-

swer, who put that in, and left this out of their Creed: and yet, sure, were not so forgetful, after the receiving of the Holy Ghost, as to leave out any prime and principal foundation of the faith, which are the very words of your own Gordonius Huntlæus, contr. 2. c. x. n. 10. Likewise his burial was put in, perhaps, as necessary of itself to be known. But though it were not, yet hath it manifestly so near relation to these that are necessary, (his passion and resurrection; being the consequent of the one, and the antecedent of the other) that it is no marvel if for their sakes it was put in. For though I verily believe that there is no necessary point of this nature, but what is in the Creed, yet I do not affirm, because I cannot prove it, that there is nothing in the Creed but what is necessary. You demand, thirdly, "why did they not express Scriptures, sacraments, and all fundamental points of faith tending to practice, as well as those which rest in belief?" I answer, because their purpose was to comprise in it only these necessary points which rest in belief: which appears, because of practical points there is not in it so much as one.

77. Dr. Potter subjoins to what is said above, "That as well, nay better, they might have given no article but that of the church, and sent us to the church for all the rest: for in setting down others besides that, and not all, they make us believe we have all, when we have not all." The consequence you deny: and neither give reason against it, nor satisfy his reason for it, which yet, in my judgment, is good and concluding. The proposition to be proved is this: that, if your doctrine were true, this short Creed—I believe the Roman

church to be infallible—would have been better; that is, more effectual to keep the believers of it from heresy, and in the true faith, than this Creed which now we have. A proposition so evident, that I cannot see how either you, or any of your religion, or indeed any sensible man, can from his heart deny it. Yet, because you make shew of doing so, or else, which I rather hope, do not rightly apprehend the force of the reason, I will endeavour briefly to add some light and strength to it, by comparing the effects of these several supposed Creeds.

78. The former Creed, therefore, would certainly produce these effects in the believers of it: an impossibility of being in any formal heresy: a necessity of being prepared in mind to come out of all error in faith, or material heresy, which certainly you will not deny; or, if you do, you pull down the only pillar of your church and religion, and deny that which is in effect the only thing you labour to prove through your whole book.

79. The latter Creed which now we have, is so ineffectual for these good purposes, that you yourself tell us of innumerable, gross, damnable heresies, that have been, are and may be, whose contrary truths are neither explicitly, nor by consequence, comprehended in this Creed; so that no man, by the belief of this Creed without the former, can be possibly guarded from falling into them, and continuing obstinate in them. Nay, so far is this Creed from guarding them from these mischiefs, that it is more likely to ensnare them into them, by seeming, and yet not being a full comprehension of all necessary points of faith: which is apt (as experience shews) to

misguide men into this (as you conceive it) pernicious error, that believing the Creed, they believe all necessary points of faith; whereas, indeed, according to you, they do not so. Now upon these grounds I thus conclude: that Creed, which hath great commodities and no danger, would certainly be better than that which hath great danger, and wants many of these great commodities; but the former short Creed proposed by me—I believe the Roman church to be infallible—(if your doctrine be true) is of the former condition, and the latter, that is the Apostles' Creed, is of the latter; therefore the former (if your doctrine be true) would, without controversy, be better than the latter.

80. But (say you) by this kind of arguing, one might infer quite contrary.—If the Apostles' Creed contain all points necessary to salvation, what need have we of any church to teach us? And, consequently, what need of the article of the church?—To which I answer, that having compared your inference and Dr. Potter's together, I cannot discover any shadow of resemblance between them, nor any shew of reason, why the perfection of the Apostles' Creed should exclude a necessity of some body to deliver it. Much less why the whole Creed's containing all things necessary should make the belief of a part of it unnecessary. As well (for aught I understand) you might avouch this inference to be as good as Dr. Potter's: the Apostles' Creed contains all things necessary, therefore there is no need to believe in God. Neither doth it follow so well as Dr. Potter's argument follows, that if the Apostles' Creed contains all things necessary, that all other creeds and catechisms, wherein are added divers other parti-

culars, are superfluous. For these other particulars may be the duties of obedience, they may be profitable points of doctrine, they may be good expositions of the Apostles' Creed, and so not superfluous; and yet for all this the Creed may still contain all points of belief that are simply necessary. These therefore are poor consequences, but no more like Dr. Potter's than an apple is like an oyster.

81. But this consequence after you have sufficiently slighted and disgraced it, at length you promised us news, and pretend to grant it. But what is that which you mean to grant? That the apostles did put no article in their Creed but only that of the church? Or, that, if they had done so, they had done better than now they have done? This is Dr. Potter's inference out of your doctrine: and truly, if you should grant this, this were news indeed? Yes, say you, I will grant it, but only thus far, that Christ hath referred us only to his church. Yea, but this is clean another thing, and no news at all, that you should grant that which you would fain have granted to you. So that your dealing with us is just as if a man should proffer me a courtesy, and pretend that he would oblige himself, by a note under his hand, to give me twenty pounds; and instead of it write, that I owe him forty, and desire me to subscribe to it, and be thankful. Of such favours as these it is very safe to be liberal.

82. You tell us afterward (but how it comes in I know not) that—it were a childish argument, the Creed contains not all things necessary: *ergo*, it is not profitable. Or, the church alone is sufficient to teach us by some convenient means: *ergo*, she must teach us without means.—These

indeed are childish arguments; but, for aught I see, you alone are the father of them: for, in Dr. Potter's book, I can neither meet with them, nor any like them. He, indeed, tells you, that if (by any impossible supposition) your doctrine were true, another and a far shorter creed would have been more expedient: even this alone—I believe the Roman church to be infallible. But why you should conclude, he makes this Creed which we have unprofitable; because he says another, that might be conceived upon this false supposition, would be more profitable: or, that he lays a necessity upon the church of teaching without means: or, of not teaching this very Creed which now is taught; these things are so subtle that I cannot apprehend them. To my understanding, by those words, "and sent us to the church for all the rest," he does rather manifestly imply, that the rest might be very well not only profitable, but necessary, and that the church was to teach this by creeds, or catechisms, or councils, or any other means which she should make choice of: for being infallible, she could not choose amiss.

83. Whereas therefore, you say, "If the apostles had expressed no article but that of the catholic church, she must have taught us the other articles, in particular, by creeds or other means:" this is very true, but no way repugnant to the truth of this which follows, that the apostles (if your doctrine be true) had done better service to the church, though they had never made this Creed of theirs which now we have, if, instead thereof, they had commanded, in plain terms, that for men's perpetual direction in the faith, this short Creed shall be taught all men—I believe the Roman church

shall be for ever infallible. Yet you must not so mistake me, as if I meant that they had done better, not to have taught the church the substance of Christian religion; for then the church not having learned it of them, could not have taught it us. This therefore I do not say, but supposing they had written these Scriptures as they have written, wherein all the articles of their Creed are plainly delivered, and preached that doctrine which they did preach, and done all other things as they have done, besides the composing their symbol; I say, if your doctrine were true, they had done a work infinitely more beneficial to the church of Christ, if they had never composed this symbol, which is but an imperfect comprehension of the necessary points of simple belief, and no distinctive mark (as a symbol should be) between those that are good Christians, and those that are not so; but instead thereof, had delivered this one proposition, which would have been certainly effectual for all the aforesaid good intents and purposes—the Roman church shall be for ever infallible in all things, which she proposes as matters of faith.

84. Whereas you say—if we will believe we have all in the Creed when we have not at all, it is not the apostles' fault, but our own.—I tell you plainly, if it be a fault, I know not whose it should be but theirs. For sure it can be no fault in me to follow such guides whithersoever they lead me: now, I say, they have led me into this persuasion, because they have given me great reason to believe it, and none to the contrary. The reason they have given me to believe it, is, because it is apparent and confessed, they did propose to themselves in composing it, some good end or ends;

as that Christians might have a form, by which (for matter of faith) they might profess themselves catholics; so Putean out of Tho. Aquinas. "That the faithful might know what the Christian people is to believe explicitly." So Vincent Filiucius. "That being separated into divers parts of the world, they might preach the same thing: and, that they might serve as a mark to distinguish true Christians from infidels." So Cardinal Richelieu. Now for all these, and for any other good intent, it will be plainly uneffectual, unless it contain at least all points of simple belief, which are, in ordinary course, necessary to be explicitly known by all men. So that if it be a fault in me to believe this, it must be my fault to believe the apostles wise and good men: which I cannot do if I believe not this. And, therefore, what Richardus de sancto Victore says of God himself, I make no scruple at all to apply to the apostles, and to say, *Si error est quod credo, a vobis deceptus sum?* If it be an error, which I believe, it is you, and my reverend esteem of you and your actions, that hath led me into it. For as for your suspicion, that we are led into this persuasion out of a hope that we may the better maintain by it some opinions of our own, it is plainly uncharitable. I know no opinion I have which I would not as willingly forsake as keep, if I could see sufficient reason to induce me to believe, that it is the will of God I should forsake it. Neither do I know any opinion I hold against the church of Rome, but I have more evident grounds than this whereupon to build it. For let but these truths be granted—that the authority of the Scriptures is independent on your church, and dependent only in respect of us upon

universal tradition; that Scripture is the only rule of faith: that all things necessary to salvation are plainly delivered in Scripture: let, I say, these most certain and Divine truths be laid for foundations, and let our superstructions be consequent and coherent to them; and I am confident peace would be restored, and truth maintained against you, though the Apostles' Creed were not in the world.

CHAP. V.

That Luther, Calvin, their associates, and all who began or continue the separation from the external communion of the Roman church, are guilty of the proper and formal sin of schism.

"THE searcher of all hearts is witness, with how unwilling minds catholics are drawn to fasten the denomination of schismatics, or heretics, on them for whose souls, if they employed their best blood, they judge that it could not be better spent! If we rejoice, that they are contristated at such titles, our joy riseth not from their trouble or grief, but as that of the apostles' did, from the fountain of charity, because they are contristated to repentance; that so, after unpartial examination, they, finding themselves to be what we say, may, by God's holy grace, begin to dislike what themselves are. For our part, we must remember that our obligation is to keep within the mean, betwixt uncharitable bitterness and pernicious flattery, not

yielding to worldly respects, nor offending Christian modesty, but uttering the substance of truth in so charitable manner, that not so much we, as truth and charity, may seem to speak, according to the wholesome advice of St. Gregory Nazianzen in these Divine words: 'We do not affect peace with * prejudice of the true doctrine, that so we may get a name of being gentle and mild; and yet we seek to conserve peace, fighting in a lawful manner, and containing ourselves within our compass, and the rule of spirit. And of these things my judgment is, and for my part, I prescribe the same law to all that deal with souls, and treat of true doctrine, that neither they exasperate men's minds by harshness, nor make them haughty or insolent by submission; but that in the cause of faith they behave themselves prudently and advisedly, and do not in either of these things exceed the mean.' With whom agreeth St. Leo, saying: 'It behoveth us in such causes to be most † careful, that, without noise of contentions, both charity be conserved and truth maintained.'

2. "For better method, we will handle these points in order. First, We will set down the nature and essence, or, as I may call it, the quality of schism. In the second place, The greatness and grievousness, or (so to term it) the quantity thereof. For the nature, or quality, will tell us who may without injury be judged schismatics; and by the greatness, or quantity, such as find themselves guilty thereof will remain acquainted with the true state of their soul, and whether they may conceive any hope of salvation or no. And be-

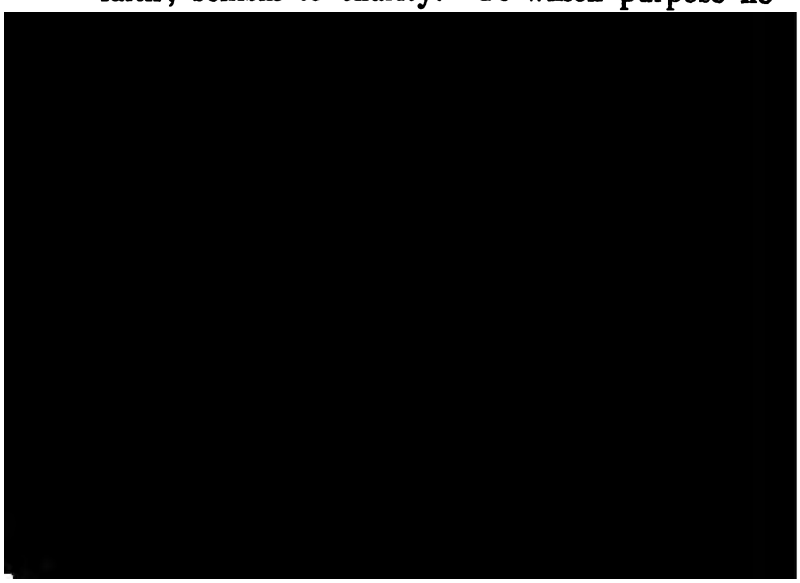
* Orat. 32. † Epist. 8.

cause schism will be found to be a division from the church, which could not happen, unless there were always a visible church; we will, thirdly, prove, or rather take it as a point to be granted by all Christians, that in all ages there hath been such a visible congregation of faithful people. Fourthly, We will demonstrate that Luther, Calvin, and the rest, did separate themselves from the communion of that always visible church of Christ, and therefore were guilty of schism. And, fifthly, We will make it evident, that the visible true church of Christ, out of which Luther and his followers departed, was no other but the Roman church; and consequently, that both they, and all others who persist in the same divisions, are schismatics, by reason of their separation from the church of Rome.

I. Point. *The nature of schism.*

3. "For the first point, touching the nature or quality of schism: as the natural perfection of man consists in his being the image of God, his Creator, by the powers of his soul; so his supernatural perfection is placed in similitude with God as his last end and felicity; and, by having the said spiritual faculties, his understanding and will, linked to him. His understanding is united to God by faith, his will by charity: the former relies upon his infallible truth; the latter carrieth us to his infinite goodness. Faith hath a deadly opposite, heresy. Contrary to the union or unity of charity, is separation and division. Charity is twofold. As it respects God, his opposite vice is hatred against God; as it uniteth us to our neigh-

bour, his contrary is separation or division of affections and will, from our neighbour: our neighbour may be considered, either as one private person hath a single relation to another, or as all concur to make one company or congregation, which we call the church; and this is the most principal reference and union of one man with another; because the chiefest unity is that of the whole, to which the particular unity of parts is subordinate. This unity, or oneness (if so I may call it) is effected by charity, uniting all the members of the church in one mystical body; contrary to which is schism, from the Greek word signifying *scissure*, or division. Wherefore upon the whole matter, we find that schism, as the angelical Doctor St. Thomas defines it, is 'a voluntary separation * from the unity of that charity whereby all the members of the church are united.' From hence he deduceth, that schism is a special and particular vice, distinct from heresy, because they are opposite to two different virtues; heresy to faith; schism to charity. To which purpose he



false things; but schismatics by wicked divisions break from fraternal charity, although they believe what we believe. Therefore the heretic belongs not to the church, because she loves God; nor the schismatics, because she loves her neighbour.' And in another place he saith, 'It is wont to be demanded how* schismatics be distinguished from heretics; and this difference is found, that not a diverse faith, but the divided society of communion doth make schismatics.' It is then evident that schism is different from heresy. Nevertheless (saith St. Thomas†) as he who is deprived of faith must needs want charity; so every heretic is a schismatic, but not conversively every schismatic is a heretic; though because want of charity disposes and makes way to the destruction of faith (according to those words of the apostle, 'which [a good conscience] some casting off, have suffered shipwreck in their faith') schism speedily degenerates to heresy. St. Jerome after the rehearsed words teacheth, saying, 'Though schism in the beginning may in some sort be understood different from heresy; yet there is no schism which doth not feign some heresy to itself, that so it may seem to have departed from the church upon good reason.' Nevertheless, when schism proceeds originally from heresy, heresy as being in that case the predominant quality in these two peccant humours, giveth the denomination of a heretic; as, on the other side, we are wont especially in the beginning, or for a while, to call schismatics those men who first began with only schism, though in process of time they fell into

* Qu. Evang. ex Matth. q. 11. † Ubi supra.

some heresy, and by that means are indeed both schismatics and heretics.

4. "The reason why both heresy and schism are repugnant to the being of a good catholic, is, because the catholic or universal church signifies one congregation or company of faithful people, and therefore implies not only faith, to make them faithful believers, but also communion, or common union, to make them one in charity, which excludes separation and division; and therefore in the Apostles' Creed, communion of saints is immediately joined to the catholic church.

5. "From this definition of schism may be inferred, that the guilt thereof is contracted, not only by division from the universal church, but also by a separation from a particular church or diocese which agrees with the universal. In this manner Meletius was a schismatic, but not a heretic, because, as we read in St. Epiphanius,* 'he was of the right faith, for his faith was not altered at any time from the holy catholic church, &c. He made a sect, but departed not from faith.' Yet because he made to himself a particular congregation against St. Peter, archbishop of Alexandria, his lawful superior, and by that means brought in a division in that particular church, he was a schismatic. And it is well worth the noting, that the Meletians building new churches, put this title upon them, The Church of Martyrs; and upon the ancient churches of those who succeeded Peter, was inscribed, The Catholic Church: for so it is. A new sect must have a new name, which though it be never so gay and specious, as the

* Hæres. 68.

church of martyrs; the reformed church, &c. yet the novelty sheweth that it is not the catholic, nor a true church. And that schism may be committed by division from a particular church, we read in Optatus Milevitanus* these remarkable words, (which do well declare who be schismatics) brought by him to prove that not Cæcilianus but Parmenianus was a schismatic: 'for Cæcilianus went not out from Majorinus thy grandfather (he means his next predecessor, but one in the bishopric) but Majorinus from Cæcilianus; neither did Cæcilianus depart from the chair of Peter, or of Cyprian (who was but a particular bishop), but Majorinus, in whose chair thou sittest, which had no beginning before Majorinus himself: seeing it is manifestly known that those things were so done, it evidently appeareth that you are heirs both of traditors (that is, of those who delivered up the Holy Bible to be burned) and of schismatics.' And it seemeth that this kind of schism must principally be admitted by protestants, who acknowledge no one visible head of the whole church, but hold that every particular diocese, church, or country is governed by itself, independently of any one person, or general council, to which all Christians have obligation to submit their judgments and wills.

II. Point. *The grievousness of schism.*

6. "As for the grievousness or quantity of schism (which was the second point proposed) St. Thomas teacheth, that, amongst sins against

* Lib. i. cont. Parmen.

our neighbour, schism* is the most grievous; because it is against the good of the multitude or community. And therefore as in a kingdom or commonwealth, there is as great difference between the crime of rebellion or sedition, and debates among private men, as there is inequality betwixt one man and a whole kingdom; so, in the church, schism is as much more grievous than sedition in a kingdom, as the spiritual good of souls surpasseth the civil and political weal. And St. Thomas adds farther, that they lose the spiritual power of jurisdiction; and if they go about to absolve from sin, or to excommunicate, their actions are invalid; which he proves out of the canon *Novatianus*, causa 7. quest. 1. which saith, 'He that keepeth neither the unity of spirit, nor the peace of agreement, and separates himself from the bond of the church, and the college of priests, can neither have the power nor dignity of a bishop.' The power also of order (for example, to consecrate the eucharist, to ordain priests, &c.) they cannot lawfully exercise.

7. "In the judgment of the holy fathers, schism is a most grievous offence. St. Chrysostome† compares these schismatical dividers of Christ's mystical body to those who sacrilegiously pierced his natural body, saying, 'Nothing doth so much incense God, as that the church should be divided. Although we should do innumerable good works, if we divide the full ecclesiastical congregation, we shall be punished no less than they who tore his (natural) body. For that was done to the gain of the whole world, although not with that

* Supra art. 2. ad 3. † Hom. 11. in ep. ad Eph.

intention; but this hath no profit at all, but there ariseth from it most great harm. These things are spoken, not only to those who bear office, but also to those who are governed by them.' Behold how neither a moral good life, (which conceit deceiveth many) nor authority of magistrates, nor any necessity of obeying superiors can excuse, schism from being a most heinous offence. Obtatus Milevitanus* calls schism *ingens flagitium*, 'a huge crime.' And speaking to the Donatists, saith, that 'schism is evil in the highest degree, even you are not able to deny.' No less pathetic is St. Augustine upon this subject. He reckons schismatics amongst pagans, heretics, and Jews, saying, 'religion is to be sought, neither in the confusion of pagans, nor† in the filth of heretics, nor in the languishing of schismatics, nor in the age of the Jews, but amongst those alone who are called Christian catholics, or orthodox; that is, lovers of unity in the whole body, and followers of truth.' Nay, he esteems them worse than infidels and idolaters, saying, 'Those whom the Donatists ‡ heal from the wound of infidelity and idolatry, they hurt more grievously with the wound of schism.' Let here those men who are pleased untruly to call us idolaters reflect upon themselves, and consider that this holy father judgeth schismatics (as they are) to be worse than idolaters, which they absurdly call us. And this he proveth by the example of Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, and other rebellious schismatics of the Old Testament, who were conveyed alive down into hell,

* Lib. i. cont. Parmen. † Lib. de vera Relig. cap. vi.
‡ Cont. Donatist. l. 1. cap. viii.

and punished more openly than idolaters. 'No doubt (saith this holy father) but* that was committed most wickedly, which was punished most severely.' In another place he yoketh schism with heresy, saying, upon the eighth beatitude: 'Many† heretics, under the name of Christians, deceiving men's souls,' do suffer many such things; but therefore they are excluded from this reward, because it is not only said, 'happy are they who suffer persecution,' but there is added, 'for justice.' But where there is not sound faith, there cannot be justice. Neither can schismatics promise to themselves any part of this reward, because likewise where there is no charity, there cannot be justice. And, in another place, yet more effectually he saith, 'being out of the ‡church, and divided from the heap of unity, and the bond of charity, thou shouldst be punished with eternal death, though thou shouldst be burned alive for the name of Christ.' And in another place he hath these words: 'If he hear not the church, let him be to§ thee as an heathen or publican; which is more grievous than if he were smitten with the sword, consumed with flames, or cast to wild beasts.' And elsewhere, 'Out of the catholic church (saith he) one‖ may have faith, sacraments, orders, and, in sum, all things except salvation.' With St. Augustine, his countryman and second self in sympathy of spirit, St. Fulgentius agreeth, saying, 'Believe this¶ steadfastly without doubting, that

* Cont. Donatist. l. 2. cap. vi.
† De serm. Dom. in monte, cap. v.
‡ Epist. 204.
§ Cont. adv. Leg. et Prophet. l. 2. cap. xvii.
‖ De gest. cum. Emerit. ¶ De fide ad Pet.

every heretic or schismatic, baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, if before the end of his life he be not reconciled to the catholic church, what alms soever he give, yea, though he should shed his blood for the name of Christ, he cannot obtain salvation.' Mark again, how no moral honesty of life, no good deeds, no martyrdom, can without repentance avail any schismatic for salvation. Let us also add that Dr. Potter saith: schism is no less * damnable than heresy.

8. "But O you holy, learned, zealous fathers and doctors of God's church; out of these premises, of the grievousness of schism, and of the certain damnation which it bringeth (if unrepented) what conclusion draw you for the instruction of Christians? St. Augustine maketh this wholesome inference: 'there is† no just necessity to divide unity.' St. Irenæus concludeth: 'they cannot‡ make any so important reformation, as the evil of the schism is pernicious.' St. Dennis, of Alexandria, saith: 'certainly §all things should rather be endured, than to consent to the division of the church of God: those martyrs being no less glorious, that expose themselves to hinder the dismembering of the church, than those that suffer, rather than they will offer sacrifice to idols. Would to God all those who divided themselves from that visible church of Christ, which was upon earth when Luther appeared, would rightly consider of these things! and thus much of the second point.

* Page 42.
† Cont. Parm. l. 2. cap. lxii.
‡ Cont. hæres. l. 4. c. lxii.
§ Apud. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. 6.

III. Point. *Perpetual visibility of the church.*

9. " We have just and necessary occasion eternally to bless Almighty God, who hath vouchsafed to make us members of the catholic Roman church, from which while men fall, they precipitate themselves into so vast absurdities, or rather sacrilegious blasphemies, as is implied in the doctrine of the total deficiency of the visible church, which yet is maintained by divers chief protestants, as may at large be seen in Brerely, and others; out of whom I will here name Jewel, saying, 'the truth was unknown * at that time, and unheard of, when Martin Luther and Ulderick Zuinglius first came unto the knowledge and preaching of the gospel. Perkins saith: we say, that † before the days of Luther, for the space of many hundred years, an universal apostacy overspread the whole face of the earth, and that our (protestant) church was not then visible to the world. Napper upon the Revelations teacheth, that from the year of Christ ‡ three hundred and sixteen, the antichristian and papistical reign hath begun, reigning universally, and without any debatable contradiction, one thousand two hundred sixty years' (that is, till Luther's time): and that, 'from the year of § Christ three hundred and sixteen, God hath withdrawn his visible church from open assemblies, to the hearts of particular godly men, &c. during the space of one thousand two

* Apol. part 4. c. iv. divis. 2. and in Defence, printed Ann, 1571, p. 426.

† In his Exposition upon the Creed, p. 400.

‡ Propos. xxxvii. p. 68.

§ Ibid. cap. xii. p. 161. col. 3.

hundred threescore years.' And that 'the * pope and clergy have possessed the outward visible church of Christians even one thousand two hundred threescore years. And that the † true church abode latent, and invisible.' And Brocard ‡ upon the Revelations, professeth to join in opinion with Napper.' Fulk affirmeth, 'that in the § time of Boniface the Third, which was the year six hundred and seven, the church was invisible, and fled into the wilderness, there to remain a long season.' Luther saith, *Primo solus eram.* 'At the first ‖ I was alone.' Jacob Hailbronnerus, one of the disputants for the protestant party in the conference at Ratisbon, affirmeth, ¶ that 'the true church was interrupted by apostacy from the true faith.' Calvin saith: 'it is absurd in the very ** beginning to break one from another, after we have been forced to make a separation from the whole world.' It were over long to allege the words of Joannes Regius, Daniel Chamierus, Beza, Ochimus, Castalio, and others, to the same purpose. The reason which cast them upon this wicked doctrine, was a desperate voluntary necessity: because they being resolved not to acknowledge the Roman church to be Christ's true church, and yet being convinced by all manner of evidence, that for divers ages before Luther there was no other congregation of Christians, which could be the church of Christ; there was

* Propos. in cap. xi. p. 145.
† Ibid. p. 191.
‡ Fol. 110. 123.
§ Answer to a counterfeit Catholic, p. 16.
‖ In præfat. operum suorum.
¶ In suo Acatholico, vol. a. 15. c. ix. p. 479.
** Epist. 141.

no remedy but to affirm, that upon earth Christ had no visible church: which they would never have avouched, if they had known how to avoid the aforesaid inconvenience (as they apprehended it) of submitting themselves to the Roman church.

10. " Against these exterminating spirits, Dr. Potter, and other more moderate protestants, profess, that Christ always had, and always will have, upon earth a visible church: otherwise (saith he) our Lord's * promise of her stable † edification should be of no value. And, in another place, having affirmed that protestants have not left the church of Rome, but her corruptions, and acknowledging her still to be a member of Christ's body, he seeketh to clear himself and others from schism, because (saith he) 'the property‡ of schism is (witness the Donatists and Luciferians) to cut off, from the body of Christ and the hope of salvation, the church from which it separates. And if any zealots amongst us have proceeded to heavier censures, their zeal may be excused, but their charity and wisdom cannot be justified.' And elsewhere he acknowledgeth, that the Roman church hath those main and§ essential truths, which give her the name and essence of a church.

11. " It being therefore granted by Dr. Potter, and the chiefest and best learned English protestants, that Christ's visible church cannot perish, it will be needless for me on this occasion to prove it. St. Augustine doubted not to say, 'the prophets ‖ spake more obscurely of Christ than of the church: because, as I think, they did foresee

* Page 154. † Matt. xvi. 18. ‡ Page 76.
§ Page 83. ‖ In Psal. xxx. Com. 2.

in spirit that men were to make parties against the church, and that they were not to have so great strife concerning Christ: therefore that was more plainly foretold, and more openly prophesied, about which greater contentions were to rise, that it might turn to the condemnation of them who have seen it, and yet gone forth.' And in another place he saith: 'how do we confide * to have received manifestly Christ himself from Holy Scriptures, if we have not also manifestly received the church from them?' And, indeed, to what congregation shall a man have recourse for the affairs of his soul, if upon earth there be no visible church of Christ? Beside, to imagine a company of men believing one thing in their heart, and with their mouth professing the contrary, (as they must be supposed to do: for, if they had professed what they believed, they would have become visible) is to dream of a damned crew of dissembling sycophants, but not to conceive a right notion of the church of Christ our Lord. And therefore St. Augustine saith, 'we cannot be saved, unless labouring also for the † salvation of others, we profess with our mouths the same faith which we bear in our hearts.' And if any man hold it lawful to dissemble, and deny matters of faith, we cannot be assured, but that they actually dissemble, and hide anabaptism, Arianism, yea Turcism, and even atheism, or any other false belief, under the outward profession of Calvinism. Do not protestants teach that preaching of the word, and administration of sacraments (which cannot but make a church visible) are inseparable

* Epist. 48. † St. Aug. de Fide et Symbol. c. 7.

notes of the true church? And therefore they must either grant a visible church, or none at all. No wonder, then, if St. Augustine account this heresy so gross, that he saith against those who in his time defended the like error: 'but this church which * hath been of all nations is no more, she hath perished: so say they that are not in her. O impudent speech!' And afterward: 'this voice so abominable, so detestable, so full of presumption and falsehood, which is sustained with no truth, enlightened with no wisdom, seasoned with no salt, vain, rash, heady, pernicious, the Holy Ghost foresaw,' &c. And 'peradventure some † one may say, there are other sheep I know not where, with which I am not acquainted, yet God hath care of them. But he is too absurd in human sense, that can imagine such things.' And these men do not consider, that while they deny the perpetuity of a visible church, they destroy their own present church, according to the argument, which St. Augustine urged against the Donatists in these words: ‡ 'If the church were lost in Cyprian's (we may say in Gregory's) time, from whence did Donatus (Luther) appear? From what earth did he spring? From what sea is he come? From what heaven did he drop?' And in another place: 'how can they vaunt § to have any church, if she hath ceased ever since those times?' And all divines by defining schism to be a division from the true church, supposed that there must be a known church, from which it is possible for men to depart. But enough of this in these few words.

* In Psal. 101.
† De ovib. c. i.
‡ De Bapt. cont. Donat.
§ Lib. iii. cant. Parm.

IV. Point. *Luther and all that follow him are schismatics.*

12. " Let us now come to the fourth and chiefest point, which was, to examine whether Luther, Calvin, and the rest, did not depart from the external communion of Christ's visible church, and by that separation became guilty of schism. And that they are properly schismatics clearly followeth from the grounds which we have laid concerning the nature of schism, which consists in leaving the external communion of the visible church of Christ our Lord: and it is clear, by evidence of fact, that Luther and his followers forsook the communion of the ancient church.

" For they did not so much as pretend to join with any congregation, which had a being before their time; for they would needs conceive that no visible company was free from errors in doctrine, and corruption in practice: and therefore, they opposed the doctrine; they withdrew their obedience from the prelates; they left participation in sacraments; they changed the liturgy of public service of whatsoever church then extant. And these things they pretended to do out of a persuasion, that they were bound (forsooth) in conscience so to do, unless they would participate with errors, corruptions, and superstitions. ' We dare not (saith Dr. Potter) communicate * with Rome, either in her public liturgy, which is manifestly polluted with gross superstition,' &c. ' or in those corrupt and ungrounded opinions, which she hath added to the faith of catholics.' But now

* Page 68.

let Dr. Potter tell me with what visible church extant before Luther, he would have adventured to communicate in her public liturgy and doctrine, since he durst not communicate with Rome? He will not be able to assign any, even with any little colour of common sense. If then they departed from all visible communities professing Christ, it followeth that they also left the communion of the true visible church whichsoever it was, whether that of Rome, or any other; of which point I do not for the present dispute. Yea, this the Lutherans do not only acknowledge, but prove and brag of. 'If (saith a learned Lutheran) there had been right * believers which went before Luther in his office, there had then been no need of a Lutheran reformation.' Another affirmed it to be ridiculous, to think that in the time † before Luther, any had the purity of doctrine; and that Luther should receive it from them, and not they from Luther. Another speaketh roundly and saith: it is impudency to say, 'that many learned men ‡ in Germany, before Luther, did hold the doctrine of the gospel.' And I add: that far greater impudency it were to affirm, that Germany did not agree with the rest of Europe, and other Christian catholic nations, and consequently, that it is the greatest impudency to deny, that he departed from the communion of the visible catholic church, spread over the whole world. We have heard Calvin saying of protestants in general, 'we were even forced § to make a separation from the whole

* Georgius Milius in Aug. Confess. art. 7. de Eccles. p. 137.

† Bened. Morgenstern, tract. de Eccles. p. 145.

‡ Conrad. S. Husselb. in Theol. Calvin. lib. ii. fol. 130.

§ Epist. 141.

world.' And Luther of himself in particular: 'in the beginning * I was alone;' *ergo*, (say I, by your good leave) you were at least a schismatic, divided from the ancient church, and a member of no new church. For no sole man can constitute a church; and though he could, yet such a church could not be that glorious company, of whose number, greatness, and amplitude, so much hath been spoken, both in the Old Testament and in the New.

13. " Dr. Potter endeavours to avoid this evident argument by divers evasions; but by the confutation thereof I will (with God's holy assistance) take occasion, even out of his own answers and grounds, to bring unanswerable reasons to convince them of schism.

14. " His chief answer is: that they have not left the church, but her corruptions.

15. I reply. This answer may be given either by those furious people, who teach that those abuses and corruptions in the church were so enormous, that they could not stand with the nature or being of a true church of Christ: or else by those other more calm protestants, who affirm that those errors did not destroy the being, but only deform the beauty, of the church. Against both these sorts of men, I may fitly use that unanswerable dilemma, which St. Augustine brings against the Donatists in these concluding words: ' tell me whether the † church at that time, when you say she entertained those who were guilty of all crimes, by the contagion of those sinful persons, perished or perished not? *Ans.* Whether the

* In Præfat. operum suorum.

† Lib. cont. Epist. Gaudent. cap. vii.

church perished, or perished not? Make choice of what you think. If then she perished, what church brought forth Donatus? (we may say Luther.) But if she could not perish, because so many were incorporated into her, without baptism, (that is, without a second baptism, or rebaptization, and, I may say, without Luther's reformation) answer me, I pray you, what madness did move the sect of Donatus to separate themselves from her upon the pretence to avoid the communion of bad men?' I beseech the reader to ponder every one of St. Augustine's words, and to consider, whether any thing could have been spoken more directly against Luther and his followers, of what sort soever.

16. "And now to answer more in particular; I say to those who teach that the visible church of Christ perished for many ages, that I can easily afford them the courtesy to free them from mere schism; but all men touched with any spark of zeal, to vindicate the wisdom and goodness of our Saviour from blasphemous injury, cannot choose but believe and proclaim them to be superlative arch heretics. Nevertheless, if they will needs have the honour of singularity, and desire to be both formal heretics, and properly schismatics, I will tell them, that while they dream of an invisible church of men, which agreed with them in faith, they will upon due reflection find themselves to be schismatics from those corporeal angels, or invisible men, because they held external communion with the visible church of those times, the outward communion of which visible church these modern Hotspurs forsaking, were thereby divided from the outward commu-

nion of their hidden brethren, and so are separatists from the external communion of them, with whom they agree in faith; which is schism in the most formal and proper signification thereof. Moreover, according to Dr. Potter, those boisterous creatures are properly schismatics. For, the reason why he thinks himself, and such as he is, to be cleared from schism, notwithstanding their division from the Roman church, is, (because according to his divinity) the property of * schism is, (witness the Donatists and Luciferians) to cut off from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation, the church from which it separates: but those protestants of whom we now speak—cut off from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation, the church from which they separated themselves; and they do it directly as the Donatists (in whom you exemplify) did, by affirming that the true church had perished; and therefore they cannot be cleared from schism, if you may be their judge. Consider, I pray you, how many prime protestants, both domestical and foreign, you have at one blow struck off from hope of salvation, and condemned to the lowest pit for the grievous sin of schism. And withal it imports you to consider, that you also involve yourself, and other moderate protestants, in the self-same crime and punishment, while you communicate with those, who, according to your own principles, are properly and formally schismatics. For if you held yourself obliged, under pain of damnation, to forsake the communion of the Roman church, by reason of their errors and corruptions, which yet you confess were not fun-

* Page 76.

damental; shall it not be much more damnable for you, to live in communion and confraternity with those who defend an error of the failing of the church; which in the Donatists you confess* to have been properly heretical against the article of our Creed—I believe the church? And I desire the reader here to apply an authority of St. Cyprian, (Epist. 76.) which he shall find alleged in the next number. And this may suffice for confutation of the aforesaid answer, as it might have relation to the rigid Calvinists.

17. "For confutation of those protestants, who hold that the church of Christ had always a being, and cannot err in points fundamental, and yet teach that she may err in matters of less moment, wherein, if they forsake her, they would be accounted not to leave the church, but only her corruptions; I must say that they change the state of our present question, not distinguishing between internal faith, and external communion, nor between schism and heresy. This I demonstrate out of Dr. Potter himself, who in express words teacheth, that 'the promises which our Lord hath made †unto his church for his assistance, are intended not to any particular persons or churches, but only to the church catholic. And they are to be extended not to every parcel, or particularity of truth, but only to points faith or fundamentals.' And afterwards, speaking of the universal church, he saith: 'it is comfort ‡enough for the church, that the Lord in mercy will secure her from all capital dangers, and conserve her on earth against all enemies; but she may not hope to triumph

* Page 126. † Page 151. ‡ Page 155.

over all sin and error till she be in heaven.' Out of which words I observe, that, according to Dr. Potter, the self-same church, which is the universal church, remaining the universal true church of Christ, may fall into errors and corruptions; from whence it clearly followeth, that it is impossible to leave the external communion of the church so corrupted, and retain external communion with the catholic church; since the church catholic, and the church so corrupted, is the self-same one church, or company of men. And the contrary imagination talks in a dream, as if the errors and infections of the catholic church were not inherent in her, but were separate from her, like to accidents without any subject, or rather, indeed, as if they were not accidents but hypostases of persons subsisting by themselves; for men cannot be said to live in or out of the communion of any dead creature, but with persons endued with life and reason; and much less can men be said to live in the communion of accidents, as errors and corruptions are; and therefore it is an absurd thing to affirm, that protestants divided themselves from the corruptions of the church, but not from the church herself, seeing the corruptions of the church were inherent in the church. All this is made more clear, if we consider that when Luther appeared, there were not two distinct visible true catholic churches, holding contrary doctrines, and divided in external communion; one of the which two churches did triumph over all error and corruption in doctrine and practice; but the other was stained with both. For to feign this diversity of two churches cannot stand with record of histories, which are silent of any such matter, it is

against Dr. Potter's own grounds, that the church may err in points not fundamental, which were not true, if you will imagine a certain visible catholic church free from error even in points not fundamental. It contradicteth the words in which he said, the church may not hope to triumph over all error till she be in heaven. It evacuateth the brag of protestants, that Luther reformed the whole church; and, lastly, it maketh Luther a schismatic, for leaving the communion of all visible churches, seeing (upon this supposition) there was a visible church of Christ free from all corruption, which, therefore, could not be forsaken without just imputation of schism. We must therefore truly affirm, that since there was but one visible church of Christ, which was truly catholic, and yet was (according to protestants) stained with corruption; when Luther left the external communion of the corrupted church, he could not remain in the communion of the catholic church, no more than it is possible to keep company with Dr. Christopher Potter, and not to keep company with the provost of Queen's College, in Oxford, if Dr. Potter and the provost be one and the self-same man: for so one should be, and not be, with him at the same time. This very argument, drawn from the unity of God's church, St. Cyprian urgeth to convince, that Novatianus was cut off from the church, in these words: 'the church is *one, which being one, cannot be both within and without. If she be with Novatianus, she was not with Cornelius; but if she were with Cornelius, who succeeded Fabianus by lawful or-

* Epist. 76. ad Mag.

dination, Novatianus is not in the church.' I purposely here speak only of external communion with the catholic church. For in this point there is great difference between internal acts of our understanding and will and of external deeds. Our understanding and will are faculties (as philosophers speak) abstractive, and able to distinguish, and, as it were, to part things, though in themselves they be really conjoined. But real external deeds do take things in gross as they find them, not separating things which in reality are joined together. Thus one may consider and love a sinner as he is a man, friend, benefactor, or the like; and, at the same time, not consider him, nor love him as he is a sinner; because these are acts of our understanding and will, which may respect their objects under some one formality or consideration, without reference to other things contained in the self-same objects. But if one should strike, or kill a sinful man, he will not be excused by alleging that he killed him, not as a man, but as a sinner; because the self-same person being a man, and the sinner, the external act of murder fell jointly upon the man and the sinner. And for the same reason one cannot avoid the company of a sinner, and at the same time be really present with that man who is a sinner. And this is our case; and in this our adversaries are egregiously, and many of them affectedly, mistaken: for one may in some points believe as the church believeth, and disagree from her in other. One may love the truth which she holds, and detest her (pretended) corruptions. But it is impossible that a man should really separate himself from her external communion, as she is corrupted, and be

really within the same external communion as she is sound; because she is the self-same church, which is supposed to be sound in some things, and to err in others. Now, our question for the present doth concern only this point of external communion; because schism, as it is distinguished from heresy, is committed when one divides himself from the external communion of that church with which he agrees in faith: whereas heresy doth necessarily imply a difference in matter of faith and belief; and therefore to say that they left not the visible church, but her errors, can only excuse them from heresy (which shall be tried in the next chapter), but not from schism, as long as they are really divided from the external communion of the self-same visible church; which, notwithstanding those errors wherein they do in judgment dissent from her, doth still remain the true catholic church of Christ; and therefore while they forsake the corrupted church, they forsake the catholic church. Thus then it remaineth clear, that their chiefest answer changeth the very state of the question; confoundeth internal acts of the understanding with the external deeds; doth not distinguish between schism and heresy, and leaves this demonstrated against them, that they divided themselves from the communion of the visible catholic church, because they conceived that she needed reformation. But whether this pretence of reformation will acquit them of schism, I refer to the impartial judges heretofore *alleged; as to St. Irenæus, who plainly saith, 'They cannot make any so important *re-*

* Numb. 8.

formation, as the evil of schism is pernicious.' To St. Dennis, of Alexandria, saying, 'Certainly all things should be endured rather than to consent to the division of the church of God; those martyrs being no less glorious that expose themselves to hinder the dismembering of the church than those that suffer, rather than they will offer sacrifice to idols.' To St. Augustine, who tells us, that 'not to hear the church is a more grievous thing than if he were stricken with the sword, consumed with flames, exposed to wild beasts.' And to conclude all in few words, he giveth this general prescription: 'there is no just necessity to divide unity;' and Dr. Potter may remember his own words: 'there neither was nor* can be any just cause to depart from the church of Christ, no more than from Christ himself.' But I have shewed that Luther, and the rest departed from the church of Christ (if Christ had any church upon earth): therefore there could be no just cause (of reformation, or what else soever) to do as they did; and therefore they must be contented to be held for schismatics.

18. "Moreover, I demand whether those corruptions which moved them to forsake the communion of the visible church, were in manners or doctrine? Corruption in manners yields no sufficient cause to leave the church, otherwise men must go not only out of the church, but out of the world, as the apostle saith.† Our blessed Saviour foretold that there would be in the church tares with choice corn, and sinners with just men. If then protestants wax zealous with the servants

* Page 75. † 1 Cor. v. 10.

to pluck up the weeds, let them first hearken to the wisdom of the Master, 'let both grow up.' And they ought to imitate them who, as St. Augustine saith, 'tolerate for the good *of unity, that which they detest for the good of equity.' And to whom the more frequent and foul such scandals are, by so much the more is the merit of their perseverance in the communion of the church, and the martyrdom of their patience, as the same saint calls it. If they were offended with the life of some ecclesiastical persons, must they therefore deny obedience to their pastors, and finally break with God's church? The Pastor of pastors teacheth us another lesson. 'Upon the chair of Moses† have sitten the scribes and pharisees. All things therefore whatsoever they shall say to you, observe ye, and do ye; but according to their works do ye not.' Must people except against laws, and revolt from magistrates, because some are negligent or corrupt in the execution of the same laws and performance of their office? If they intended reformation of manners, they used a strange means for the achieving of such an end, by denying the necessity of confession, laughing at austerity of penance, condemning the vows of chastity, poverty, obedience, breaking fasts, &c. And no less unfit were the men than the means. I love not recrimination, but it is well known to how great crimes Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, Beza, and others of the prime reformers were notoriously obnoxious; as might be easily demonstrated by only the transcribing of what others have delivered upon that subject; whereby it would appear, that

* Ep. 162. † Matt. xxiii. 2, 3.

they were very far from being any such apostolical men as God is wont to use in so great a work. And whereas they were wont, especially in the beginning of their revolt, maliciously to exaggerate the faults of some clergymen, Erasmus said well, *(Ep. ad fratres inferioris Germaniæ)* 'Let the riot, lust, ambition, avarice of priests, and whatsoever other crimes be gathered together, heresy alone doth exceed all this filthy lake of vices.' Besides, nothing at all was omitted by the sacred council of Trent which might tend to reformation of manners. And, finally, the vices of others are not hurtful to any but such as imitate and consent to them; according to the saying of St. Augustine: 'we conserve* innocency, not by knowing the ill deeds of men, but by not yielding consent to such as we know, and by not judging rashly of such faults as we know not.' If you answer, that not corruption in manners, but the approbation of them, doth yield sufficient cause to leave the church; I reply with St. Augustine, that the church doth (as the pretended reformers ought to have done) tolerate or bear with scandals and corruptions, but neither doth nor can approve them. 'The church (saith he) being placed †betwixt much chaff and cockle, doth bear with many things; but doth not approve, nor dissemble, nor act those things which are against faith and good like.' But because to approve corruption in manners as lawful, were an error against faith, it belongs to corruption in doctrine, which was the second part of my demand.

19. "Now then that corruptions in doctrine (I still speak upon the untrue supposition of our ad-

* De unit. Eccles. c. ii. † Ep. 116.

versaries) could not afford any sufficient cause or colourable necessity to depart from that visible church, which was extant when Luther rose, I demonstrate out of Dr. Potter's own confession; that the catholic church neither hath, nor can, err in points fundamental, as we shewed out of his own express words, which he also of set purpose delivereth in divers other places, and all they are obliged to maintain the same, who teach that Christ had always a visible church upon earth; because any one fundamental error overthrows the being of a true church. Now (as schoolmen speak) it is *implicatio in terminis* (a contradiction so plain, that one word destroyeth the other, as if one should say, a living dead man) to affirm that the church doth not err in points necessary to salvation, and damnably; and yet that it is damnable to remain in her communion, because she teacheth errors which are confessed not to be damnable. For if the error be not damnable, nor against any fundamental article of faith, the belief thereof cannot be damnable. But Dr. Potter teacheth that the catholic church cannot, and that the Roman church hath not, erred against any fundamental article of faith: therefore it cannot be damnable to remain in her communion; and so the pretended corruptions in her doctrines could not induce any obligation to depart from her communion; nor could excuse them from schism, who, upon pretence of necessity, in point of conscience, forsook her. And Dr. Potter will never be able to salve a manifest contradiction in these his words: *' To depart from the church of Rome in some doctrines

* Page 75.

and practices there might be necessary cause, though she wanted nothing necessary to salvation.' For if, notwithstanding these doctrines and practices, she wanted nothing necessary to salvation; how could it be necessary to salvation to forsake her? And therefore we must still conclude, that to forsake her was properly an act of schism.

20. "From the self-same ground of the infallibility of the church in all fundamental points, I argue after this manner—the visible church cannot be forsaken without damnation, upon pretence that it is damnable to remain in her communion, by reason of corruption in doctrine; as long as, for the truth of her faith and belief, she performeth the duty which she oweth to God and her neighbour; as long as she performeth what our Saviour exacts at her hands; as long as she doth as much as lies in her power to do. But (even according to Dr. Potter's assertion) the church performeth all these things as long as she erreth not in points fundamental, although she were supposed to err in other points not fundamental: therefore the communion of the visible church cannot be forsaken without damnation, upon pretence that it is damnable to remain in her communion, by reason of corruption in doctrine. The major or first proposition of itself is evident. The minor or second proposition doth necessarily follow out of Dr. Potter's own doctrine above rehearsed, that the promises of our Lord made to his church for his assistance, are to be *extended only to points of faith or fundamental;' (let me note here by the way, that by his [*or*] he seems to exclude from faith all points which are not fun-

* Page 151.

damental, and so we may deny innumerable texts of Scripture:) that * 'it is comfort enough for the church that the Lord in mercy will secure her from all capital dangers, &c. but she may not hope to triumph over all sin and error, till she be in heaven.' For it is evident that the church (forasmuch as concerns the truth of her doctrines and belief) owes no more duty to God and her neighbour; neither doth our Saviour exact more at her hands, nor is it in her power to do more than God doth assist her to do, which assistance is promised only for points fundamental; and consequently, as long as she teacheth no fundamental error, her communion cannot, without damnation, be forsaken. And we may fitly apply against Dr. Potter, a concionatory declamation which he makes against us, where he saith, †'May the church of after-ages make the narrow way to heaven narrower than our Saviour left it?' &c. since he himself obligeth men, under pain of damnation, to forsake the church, by reason of errors; against which our Saviour thought it needless to promise his assistance, and for which he neither denieth his grace in this life, or glory in the next. Will Dr. Potter oblige the church to do more than she may even hope for, or to perform on earth that which is proper to heaven alone?

21. "And as from your own doctrine concerning the infallibility of the church in fundamental points, we have proved that it was a grievous sin to forsake her: so do we take a strong argument from the fallibility of any who dare pretend to reform the church, which any man in his wits will

* Page 155, † Page 221.

believe to be endued with, at least as much infallibility as private men can challenge; and Dr. Potter expressly affirmeth, that Christ's promises of his assistance are not intended* to any particular persons or churches: and therefore, to leave the church by reason of errors, was at the best hand but to flit from one erring company to another, without any new hope of triumphing over errors, and without necessity, or utility, to forsake that communion, of which St. Augustine saith, 'There† is no just necessity to divide unity.' Which will appear to be much more evident, if we consider that though the church hath maintained some false doctrines, yet to leave her communion to remedy the old, were but to add a new increase of errors, arising from the innumerable disagreements of sectaries, which must needs bring with it a mighty mass of falsehoods, because the truth is but one, and indivisible. And this reason is yet stronger, if we still remember, that even, according to Dr. Potter, the visible church hath a blessing not to err in points fundamental, in which any private reformer may fail: and therefore, they could not pretend any necessity to forsake that church, out of whose communion they were exposed to danger of falling into many more, and even into damnable errors. Remember, I pray you, what yourself affirms (page 69.) where, speaking of our church and yours, you say: 'All the difference is from the weeds which remain there, and here are taken away; yet neither here perfectly nor every where alike.' Behold a fair confession of corruption still remaining in your church, which you can

* Page 151. † Ep. con. Parmen. lib. 2. 2. cap. xi.

only excuse by saying they are not fundamental, as likewise those in the Roman church are confessed to be not fundamental. What man of judgment will be a protestant since that church is confessedly a corrupt one?

22. "I still proceed to impugn you expressly upon your own grounds.—You say, that 'it is comfort enough for the church, that the Lord in mercy will secure her from all capital dangers; but she may not hope to triumph over all sin and error till she be in heaven.' Now if it be comfort enough to be secured from all capital dangers, which can arise only from error in fundamental points, why were not your first reformers content with enough, but would needs dismember the church, out of a pernicious greediness of more than enough? for this *enough*, which according to you is attained by not erring in points fundamental, was enjoyed before Luther's reformation, unless you will now against yourself affirm, that long before Luther there was no church free from error in fundamental points: moreover, if (as you say) no church may hope to triumph over all error till she be in heaven; you must either grant that errors not fundamental cannot yield sufficient cause to forsake the church, or else you must affirm that all communities may and ought to be forsaken, and so there will be no end of schisms: or rather, indeed, can there be no such thing as schism, because, according to you, all communities are subject to errors not fundamental; for which, if they may be unlawfully forsaken, it followeth clearly that it is not schism to forsake them. Lastly, since it is not lawful to leave the communion of the church for abuses in life and manners, because such miseries

cannot be avoided in this world of temptation; and since, according to your assertion, no church may hope to triumph over all sin and error; you must grant, that as she ought not to be left by reason of sin, so neither by reason of errors not fundamental; because both sin and error are (according to you) impossible to be avoided till she be in heaven.

23. "Furthermore, I ask, whether it be the quantity or number, or quality and greatness, of doctrinal errors that may yield sufficient cause to relinquish the church's communion? I prove that neither. Not the quality, which is supposed to be beneath the degree of points fundamental, or necessary to salvation. Nor the quantity, or number, for the foundation is strong enough to support all such unnecessary additions, as you term them. And if they once weighed so heavy as to overthrow the foundation, they should grow to fundamental errors, into which yourself teach the church cannot fall. 'Hay and stubble (say you) and such * unprofitable stuff, laid on the roof, destroys not the house, while the main pillars are standing on the foundation.' And tell us, I pray you, the precise number of errors which cannot be tolerated? I know you cannot do it: and therefore being uncertain, whether or no you have cause to leave the church, you are certainly obliged not to forsake her. Our blessed Saviour hath declared his will, that we forgive a private offender seventy-seven times; that is, without limitation of quantity of time, or quality of trespasses; and why then dare you allege his command, that you must not pardon his church for

* Page 155.

errors acknowledged to be not fundamental? What excuse can you feign to yourselves, who, for points not necessary to salvation, have been occasions, causes, and authors of so many mischiefs, as could not but unavoidably accompany so huge a breach in kingdoms, in commonwealths, in private persons, in public magistrates, in body, in soul, in goods, in life, in church, in the state, by schisms, by rebellions, by war, by famine, by plague, by bloodshed, by all sorts of imaginable calamities upon the whole face of the earth, wherein, as in a map of desolation, the heaviness of your crime appears, under which the world doth pant?

24. " To say for your excuse, that you left not the church, but her errors, doth not extenuate, but aggravate, your sin. For by this device you sow seeds of endless schisms, and put into the mouth of all separatists a ready answer how to avoid the note of schism from your protestant church of England, or from any other church whatsoever. They will, I say, answer, as you do prompt, that your church may be forsaken, if she fall into errors, though they be not fundamental: and, further, that no church must hope to be free from such errors; which two grounds being once laid, it will not be hard to infer the consequence that she may be forsaken.

25. " From some other words of Dr. Potter I likewise prove, that for errors not fundamental, the church ought not to be forsaken, ' there neither was (saith he) nor can be * any just cause to depart from the church of Christ, no more than

* Page 75.

from Christ himself. To depart from a particular church, and, namely, from the church of Rome, in some doctrines and practices, there might be just and necessary cause, though the church of Rome wanted nothing necessary to salvation.' Mark his doctrine, that there can be no 'just cause to depart from the church of Christ:' and yet he teacheth, that the church of Christ may err in points not fundamental; therefore (say I) we cannot forsake the Roman church for points not fundamental; for then we might also forsake the church of Christ, which yourself deny: and I pray you consider, whether you do not plainly contradict yourself, while, in the words above recited, you say there can be no just cause to forsake the catholic church; and yet that there may be necessary cause to depart from the church of Rome; since you grant that the church of Christ may err in points not fundamental; and that the Roman church hath erred only in such points; as by and by we shall see more in particular. And thus much be said to disprove their chiefest answer, that they left not the church, but her corruptions.

26. "Another evasion Dr. Potter bringeth, to avoid the imputation of schism, and it is because they still acknowledge the church of Rome to be a 'member of the body of Christ, and not cut off from the hope of salvation. And this (saith he) clears us from the * imputation of schism, whose property it is to cut off from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation, the church from which it separates.'

27. "This is an answer which, perhaps, you may

* Page 76.

get some one to approve, if first you can put him out of his wits. For what prodigious doctrines are these? Those protestants who believe that the church erred in points necessary to salvation, and for that cause left her, cannot be excused from damnable schism: but others, who believed that she had no damnable errors, did very well, yea, were obliged to forsake her: and (which is more miraculous, or rather monstrous) they did well to forsake her formally and precisely—because they judged that she retained all means necessary to salvation. I say, because they so judged. For the very reason for which he acquitteth himself, and condemneth those others as schismatics, is, because he holdeth that the church, which both of them forsook, is not cut off from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation; whereas those other zealots deny her to be a member of Christ's body, or capable of salvation, wherein alone they disagree from Dr. Potter: for in the effect of separation they agree, only they do it upon a different motive or reason. Were it not a strange excuse, if a man would think to cloak his rebellion, by alleging that he held the person against whom he rebelleth to be his lawful sovereign? And yet Dr. Potter thinks himself free from schism, because he forsook the church of Rome; but yet so, as that still he held her to be the true church, and to have all necessary means to salvation. But I will no further urge this most solemn foppery, and do much more willingly, put all catholics in mind what an unspeakable comfort it is that our adversaries are forced to confess, that they cannot clear themselves from schism, otherwise than by acknowledging that they do not, nor cannot, cut off from

the hope of salvation our church. Which is as much as if they should in plain terms say, they must be damned, unless we may be saved. Moreover, this evasion doth indeed condemn your zealous brethren of heresy, for denying the church's perpetuity, but doth not clear yourself from schism, which consists in being divided from that true church, with which a man agreeth in all points of faith, as you must profess yourself to agree with the church of Rome in all fundamental articles. For otherwise you should cut her off from the hope of salvation; and so condemn yourself of schism. And, lastly, even according to this your own definition of schism, you cannot clear yourself from that crime, unless you be content to acknowledge a manifest contradiction in your own assertions. For if you do not cut us off from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation; how come you to say, in another place, that you judge a reconciliation with us to be * damnable? That to depart from the church of Rome, there might be just and necessary † cause? That they that have the understanding and means to discover their error, and neglect to use them, we ‡ dare not flatter them (say you) with so easy a censure, of hope of salvation?—If then it be (as you say) a property of schism, to cut off, from the hope of salvation, the church from which it separates, how will you clear yourself from schism, who dare not flatter us with so easy a censure? and who affirm, that a reconciliation with us is damnable? But the truth is, there is no constancy in your assertions, by reason of difficulties which press you on all

* Page 20. † Page 75. ‡ Page 79.

sides. For you are loath to affirm clearly, that we may be saved, lest such a grant might be occasion (as in all reason it ought to be) of the conversion of protestants to the Roman church: and, on the other side, if you affirm that our church erred in points fundamental, or necessary to salvation, you know not how, nor where, nor among what company of men to find a perpetual visible church of Christ before Luther: and therefore your best shift is to say, and unsay, as your occasions command. I do not examine your assertion, that it is the property of schism, to cut off from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation, the church from which it separates: wherein you are mightily mistaken, as appears by your own example of the Donatists, who were most formal and proper heretics, and not schismatics, as schism is a vice distinct from heresy. Besides, although the Donatists, and Luciferians (whom you also allege) had been mere schismatics, yet it were against all good logic, from a particular to infer a general rule, to determine what is the property of schism.

28. "A third device I find in Dr. Potter to clear his brethren from schism, 'there is (saith he) great difference between * a schism from them, and a reformation of ourselves.'

29. "This, I confess, is a quaint subtilty, by which all schism and sin may be as well excused. For what devil incarnate could merely pretend a separation, and not rather some other motive, of virtue, truth, profit, or pleasure? But now since their pretended reformation consisted, as they

* Page 75.

gave out, in forsaking the corruptions of the church: the reformation of themselves, and their division from us, falls out to be one and the self-same thing. Nay, we see, that although they infinitely disagree in the particulars of their reformation, yet they symbolize and consent in the general point of forsaking our pretended corruptions: an evident sign that the thing upon which their thoughts first pitched, was not any particular model, or idea of religion, but a settled resolution to forsake the church of Rome. Wherefore this metaphysical speculation, that they intended only to reform themselves, cannot possibly excuse them from schism, unless first they be able to prove that they were obliged to depart from us. Yet forasmuch as concerns the fact itself; it is clear, that Luther's revolt did not proceed from any zeal of reformation. The motives which put him upon so wretched and unfortunate a work, were covetousness, ambition, lust, pride, envy, and grudging that the promulgation of indulgences was not committed to himself, or such as he desired. He himself taketh God to witness, that he fell into these troubles casually, and * against his will, not upon any intention of reformation, not so much as dreaming or suspecting any change which might † happen. And he began to preach (against indulgences) when he knew not what ‡ the matter meant. 'For (saith he) I scarcely understood § then what the

* Casu, non voluntate, in has turbas incidi, Deum ipsum testor.

† Act. et Mon. p. 404.

‡ Sleid. 5. lib. xvi. fol. 232.

§ Luth. in colloq. mensal.

name of indulgences meant.' Insomuch as afterwards Luther did much mislike of his own undertaken course, oftentime (saith he) 'wishing * that I had never begun that business.' And Fox saith, 'It is apparent that † Luther promised Cardinal Cajetan to keep silence, provided also his adversaries would do the like.' Mr. Cowper reporteth further, that 'Luther by his letter submitted ‡himself to the pope, so that he might not be compelled to recant,' with much more, which may be seen in § Brerely. But this is sufficient to shew, that Luther was far enough from intending any reformation. And if he judged a reformation to be necessary, what a huge wickedness was it in him to promise silence, if his adversaries would do the like? Or to submit 'himself to the pope, so that he might not be compelled to recant?' Or if the Reformation were not indeed intended by him, nor judged to be necessary, how can he be excused from damnable schism? And this is the true manner of Luther's revolt, taken from his own acknowledgments, and the words of the more ancient protestants themselves, whereby Dr. Potter's faltering and mincing the matter is clearly discovered and confuted. Upon what motives our country was divided from the Roman church by King Henry the Eighth, and how the schism was continued by Queen Elizabeth, I have no heart to rip up. The world knoweth it was not upon any zeal of reformation.

30. "But you will prove your former evasion by a couple of similitudes: 'If a monastery‖ should reform itself, and should reduce into prac-

* Luth. in colloq. mensal. † Act. Mon. p. 404.
‡ Cowp. in his Chronicle. § Tract. 2. c. ii. Sect. 11. subd. 2.
‖ Page 81, 82.

tice ancient good discipline, when others would not; in this case could it in reason be charged with schism from others, or with apostacy from its rule and order? Or, as in a society of men, universally infected with some disease, they that shall free themselves from the common disease, could not be therefore said to separate from the society; so neither can the reformed churches be truly accused for making a schism from the church, seeing all they did was to reform themselves.'

81. " I was very glad to find you in a monastery, but sorry when I perceived that you were inventing ways how to forsake your vocation, and to maintain the lawfulness of schism from the church, and apostacy from a religious order. Yet, before you make your final resolution, hear a word of advice. Put case, that a monastery did confessedly observe their substantial vows, and all principal statutes or constitutions of the order, though with some neglect of lesser monastical observances; and that a reformation were undertaken, not by authority of lawful superiors, but by some one, or very few in comparison of the rest; and those few known to be led, not by any spirit of reformation, but by some other sinister intention; and that the statutes of the house were even by those busy fellows confessed to have been, time out of mind, understood and practised as now they were: and further, that the pretended reformers acknowledge that themselves, as soon as they were gone out of their monastery, must not hope to be free from those, or the like errors and corruptions, for which they left their brethren; and (which is more) that they might fall into more enormous crimes than they did, or could

do, in their monastery, which we suppose to be secured from all substantial corruptions, for the avoiding of which they have an infallible assistance. Put (I say) together all these my *and's*, and then come with your *if's*, 'If a monastery shall reform itself,' &c. and tell me if you could excuse such reformers from schism, sedition, rebellion, apostacy, &c. what would you say of such reformers in your college? or tumultuous persons in a kingdom? Remember now your own tenets, and then reflect how fit a similitude you have picked out, to prove yourself a schismatic. You teach that the church may err in points not fundamental, but that for all fundamental points she is secured from error. You teach that no particular person, or church, hath any promise of assistance in points fundamental: you, and the whole world can witness, that when Luther began, he being but only *one*, opposed himself to *all*, as well subjects as superiors; and that even then when he himself confessed that he had no intention of reformation: you cannot be ignorant but that many chief learned protestants are forced to confess the antiquity of our doctrine and practice, and do in several and many controversies, acknowledge that the ancient fathers stood on our side: consider, I say, these points, and see whether your similitude do not condemn your progenitors of schism from God's visible church, yea, and of apostacy also from their religious orders, if they were vowed regulars, as Luther and divers of them were.

32. "From the monastery you are fled into a hospital of persons universally infected with some disease, where you find to be true what I sup-

posed, that after your departure from your brethren you might fall into greater inconveniences, and more infectious diseases than those for which you left them. But you are also upon the point to abandon these miserable needy persons, in whose behalf, for charity's sake, let me set before you these considerations: If the disease neither were, nor could be, mortal, because in that company of men God had placed a tree of life: if going thence, the sick man might, by curious tasting the tree of knowledge, eat poison under pretence of bettering his health: if he could not hope thereby to avoid other diseases like those for which he had quitted the company of the first infected men: if, by his departure, innumerable mischiefs were to ensue; could such a man, without senselessness, be excused by saying, that—he sought to free himself from the common disease, but not, forsooth, to separate from the society? Now yourself compare the church to a man deformed with * superfluous fingers and toes, but yet who hath not lost any vital part: you acknowledge that, out of her society no man is secured from damnable error, and the world can bear witness what unspeakable mischiefs and calamities ensued Luther's revolt from the church. Pronounce then concerning them the same sentence which even now I have shewed them to deserve, who, in the manner aforesaid, should separate from persons universally infected with some disease.

33. " But, alas! to what pass hath heresy brought men, who term themselves Christians, and yet blush not to compare the beloved spouse

* Page 156.

of our Lord, the one dove, the purchase of our Saviour's most precious blood, the holy catholic church, I mean that visible church of Christ which Luther found spread over the whole world, to a monastery so disordered that it must be forsaken; to the giant in Gath, much deformed with superfluous fingers and toes; to a society of men universally infected with some disease! And yet all these comparisons, and much worse, are neither injurious, nor undeserved, if once it be granted, or can be proved, that the visible church of Christ may err in any one point of faith, although not fundamental.

34. " Before I part from these similitudes, one thing I must observe against the evasion of Dr. Potter, that they left not the church, but her corruptions. For as those reformers of the monastery, or those other, who left the company of men universally infected with some disease, would deny themselves to be schismatics, or any way blameworthy, but could not deny but that they left the said communities: so Luther and the rest cannot so much as pretend not to have left the visible church, which according to them was infected with many diseases, but can only pretend that they did not sin in leaving her. And you speak very strangely when you say, ' in a society of men universally infected with some disease, they that should free themselves from the common disease, could not be therefore said to separate from the society:' for, if they do not separate themselves from the society of the infected persons, how do they free themselves and depart from the common disease? Do they at the same time remain in the company, and yet depart from those

infected creatures? We must then say, that they separate themselves from the persons, though it be by occasion of the disease? Or if you say, they free their own persons from the common disease, yet so, that they remain still in the company infected, subject to the superiors and governors thereof, eating and drinking, and keeping public assemblies with them, you cannot but know Luther and your reformers, the first pretended free persons from the supposed common infection of the Roman church, did not so; for they endeavoured to force the society whereof they were parts, to be healed and reformed as they were; and if it refused, they did, when they had forces, drive them away, even their superiors, both spiritual and temporal, as is notorious. Or, if they had not power to expel that supposed infected community or church of that place, they departed from them corporally, whom mentally they had forsaken before. So that you cannot deny, but Luther forsook the external communion and company of the catholic church, for which as yourself* confess, there neither was nor can be any just cause, no more than to depart from Christ himself. We do therefore infer, that Luther and the rest, who forsook that visible church, which they found upon earth, were truly and properly schismatics.

35. "Moreover, it is evident that there was a division between Luther and that church, which was visible when he arose; but that church cannot be said to have divided herself from him, before whose time she was, and in comparison of

* Page 73.

whom she was a whole, and he but a part; therefore we must say, that he divided himself and went out of her, which is to be a schismatic, or heretic, or both. By this argument, Optatus Melevitanus proveth, that not Cæcilianus, but Parmenianus was a schismatic, saying—'For Cæcilianus went not* out from Majorinus, thy grandfather; but Majorinus from Cæcilianus: neither did Cæcilianus depart from the chair of Peter, or Cyprian; but Majorinus, in whose chair thou sittest, which had no beginning before Majorinus. Since it manifestly appeareth, that these things were acted in this manner, it is clear, that you are heirs both of the deliverers up (of the Holy Bible to be burned) and also of schismatics.' The whole argument of this holy father makes directly both against Luther, and all those who continue the division which he began; and proves, that going out convinceth those who go out to be schismatics; but not those from whom they depart: that to forsake the chair of Peter is schism; yea, that it is schism to erect a chair which had no origin, or as it were predecessor, before itself: that to continue in a division begun by others, is to be heirs of schismatics: and, lastly, that to depart from the communion of a particular church (as that of St. Cyprian was) is sufficient to make a man incur the guilt of schism, and consequently, that although protestants, who deny the pope to be supreme head of the church, do think by that heresy to clear Luther from schism, in disobeying the pope; yet that will not serve to free him from schism, as it importeth a division from the obedience or communion of the parti-

* Lib. i. cont. Parmen.

cular bishop, diocese, church, and country where he lived.

36. " But it is not the heresy of protestants, or any other sectaries, that can deprive St. Peter, and his successors, of the authority which Christ our Lord conferred upon them over his whole militant church; which is a point confessed by learned protestants to be of great antiquity, and for which the judgment of divers most ancient holy fathers is reproved by them, as may be seen at large in Brerely,* exactly citing the places of such chief protestants. And we must say with St. Cyprian, 'Heresies† have sprung, and schism been bred from no other cause than for that the priest of God is not obeyed; nor one priest and judge is considered to be for the time in the church of God:' which words do plainly condemn Luther, whether he will understand them as spoken of the universal, or of every particular church; for he withdrew himself both from the obedience of the pope, and of all particular bishops and churches. And no less clear is the said Optatus Melevitanus, saying: 'Thou canst not deny‡ but that thou knowest, that, in the city of Rome, there was first an episcopal chair placed for Peter, wherein Peter, the head of all the apostles, sat; wherefore, also, he was called Cephas; in which one chair, unity was to be kept by all, lest the other apostles might attribute to themselves each one his particular chair; and that he should be a schismatic and a sinner, who against that one single chair should erect another.' Many other authorities of fathers might

* Tract. 1. Sect. 3. subd. 10. † Ep. 55.

‡ Lib. ii. cont. Parmen.

be alleged to this purpose, which I omit; my intention being not to handle particular controversies.

37. " Now the arguments which hitherto I have brought, prove that Luther and his followers were schismatics, without examining (forasmuch as belongs to this point) whether or no the church can err in any one thing great or small, because it is universally true, that there can be no just cause to forsake the communion of the visible church of Christ, according to St. Augustine, saying: ' It is not possible* that any man have just cause to separate their communion, from the communion of the whole world, and call themselves the church of Christ, as if they had separated themselves from the communion of all nations upon just cause.' But since, indeed, the church cannot err in any one point of doctrine, nor can approve any corruption in manners, they cannot with any colour avoid the just imputation of eminent schism, according to the verdict of the same holy father in these words: ' The most manifest† sacrilege of schism is eminent, when there was no cause of separation.'

38. " Lastly, I prove that protestants cannot avoid the note of schism, at least by reason of their mutual separation from one another; for most certain it is, that there is very great difference, for the outward face of a church, and profession of different faith, between the Lutherans, the rigid Calvinists, and the protestants of England. So that if Luther were in the right, those other protestants who invented doctrines far different from his, and divided themselves from him, must

* Ep. 48. † De Bapt. lib. 5. c. i.

be reputed schismatics: and the like argument may proportionably be applied to their further divisions, and subdivisions: which reason I yet urge more strongly out of Dr. Potter,* who affirms, that to him and to such as are convicted in conscience of the errors of the Roman church, a reconciliation is impossible, and damnable. And yet he teacheth, that their difference from the Roman church is not in fundamental points. Now, since amongst protestants there is such a diversity of belief, that one denieth what the other affirmeth, they must be convicted in conscience that one part is in error, (at least not fundamental) and if Dr. Potter will speak consequently, that a reconciliation between them is impossible and damnable: and what greater division, or schism, can there be, than when one part must judge a reconciliation with the other to be impossible and damnable?

39. "Out of all which premises this conclusion follows: that Luther and his followers were schismatics; from the universal visible church; from the pope, Christ's vicar on earth and successor to St. Peter; from the particular diocese in which they received baptism; from the country or nation to which they belonged; from the bishop under whom they lived; many of them from the religious order in which they were professed; from one another; and lastly, from a man's self (as much as is possible) because the self-same protestant to-day is convicted in conscience, that his yesterday's opinion was an error (as Dr. Potter knows a man in the world, who from a puritan

* Page 20.

was turned to a moderate protestant), with whom therefore a reconciliation, according to Dr. Potter's grounds, is both impossible and damnable.

40. "It seems Dr. Potter's last refuge to excuse himself and his brethren from schism, is because they proceeded according to their conscience, dictating an obligation, under damnation, to forsake the errors maintained by the church of Rome. His words are: 'Although we confess* the church of Rome to be (in some sense) a true church, and her errors to some men not damnable; yet for us who are convinced in conscience, that she errs in many things, a necessity lies upon us, even under pain of damnation, to forsake her in these errors.'

41. "I answer: it is very strange, that you judge us extremely uncharitable, in saying protestants cannot be saved; while yourself avouch the same of all learned catholics, whom ignorance cannot excuse. If this your pretence of conscience may serve, what schismatic in the church, what popular seditious brain in a kingdom, may not allege the dictamen of conscience, to free themselves from schism or sedition? No man wishes them to do any thing against their conscience; but we say, that they may and ought to rectify and depose such a conscience, which is easy for them to do, even according to your own affirmation, that we catholics want no means necessary to salvation. Easy to do? Nay, not to do so, to any man in his right wits must seem impossible. For how can these two apprehensions stand together: in the Roman church, I enjoy all means necessary to salvation, and yet I cannot

* Page 81.

hope to be saved in that church? or, who can conjoin in one brain (not cracked) these assertions? After due examination I adjudge the Roman errors not to be in themselves fundamental, or damnable; and yet, I judge that, according to true reason, it is damnable to hold them: I say, according to true reason. For, if you grant your conscience to be erroneous, in judging that you cannot be saved in the Roman church by reason of her errors, there is no other remedy, but that you must rectify your erring conscience by your other judgment, that her errors are not fundamental nor damnable. And this is no more charity than you daily afford to such other protestants as you term brethren, whom you cannot deny to be in some errors, (unless you will hold, that of contradictory propositions both may be true) and yet you do not judge it damnable to live in their communion, because you hold their errors not to be fundamental. You ought to know that, according to the doctrine of all divines, there is great difference between a speculative persuasion, and a practical dictamen of conscience: and, therefore, although they had in speculation conceived the visible church to err in some doctrines, of themselves not damnable! yet with that speculative judgment they might, and ought, to have entertained this practical dictamen, that for points not substantial to faith, they neither were bound, nor lawfully could break the bond of charity, by breaking unity in God's church. You say that 'hay and stubble,* and such unprofitable stuff (as are corruptions in points not fundamental) laid on the

* Page 145.

roof, destroys not the house, whilst the main pillars are standing on the foundation.' And you would think him a madman who, to be rid of such stuff, would set his house on fire, that so he might walk in the light, as you teach that Luther was obliged to forsake the house of God, for an unnecessary light, not without a combustion formidable to the whole Christian world, rather than bear with some errors which did not destroy the foundation of faith. And as for others, who entered in at the breach first made by Luther, they might, and ought, to have guided their consciences by that most reasonable rule of Vincentius Lyrinensis, delivered in these words: 'Indeed it is a matter of great* moment, and both most profitable to be learned, and necessary to be remembered, and which we ought again and again to illustrate and inculcate with weighty heaps of examples, that almost all catholics may know, that they ought to receive the doctors with the church, and not forsake the faith of the church with the doctors:' and much less should they forsake the faith of the church to follow Luther, Calvin, and such other novelists. Moreover, though your first reformers had conceived their own opinions to be true, yet they might, and ought, to have doubted whether they were certain: because yourself affirm, that infallibility was not promised to any particular persons or churches. And since, in cases of uncertainties, we are not to leave our superior, nor can cast off his obedience, or publicly oppose his decrees; your reformers might easily have found a safe way to satisfy their

* Adv. hæres. c. xxvii.

zealous conscience, without a public breach; especially if, with this their uncertainty, we call to mind the peaceable possession and prescription, which, by the confession of your own brethren, the church and pope of Rome did for many ages enjoy. I wish you would examine the works of your brethren, by the words yourself sets down to free St. Cyprian from schism: every syllable of which words convinceth Luther and his co-partners to be guilty of that crime, and sheweth in what manner they might, with great ease and quietness, have rectified their consciences about the pretended errors of the church. 'St. Cyprian (say you) was a peaceable* and modest man, dissented from others in his judgment, but without any breach of charity, condemned no man (much less any church) for the contrary opinion. He believed his own opinion to be true, but believed not that it was necessary, and therefore did not proceed rashly and peremptorily to censure others, but left them to their liberty.' Did your reformers imitate this manner of proceeding? Did they censure no man; much less any church? St. Cyprian believed his own opinion to be true, but believed not that it was necessary, and *therefore* did not proceed rashly and peremptorily to censure others. You believe the points, wherein Luther differs from us, not to be fundamental, or necessary; and why do you not thence infer the like *therefore*, he should not have proceeded to censure others? In a word, since their disagreement from us concerned only points which were not fundamental, they should have believed that they

* Page 124.

might have been deceived, as well as the whole visible church, which you say may err in such points; and therefore their doctrines, being not certainly true, and certainly not necessary, they could not give sufficient cause to depart from the communion of the church.

42. "In other places you write so much, as may serve us to prove, that Luther and his followers ought to have deposed and rectified their consciences: as, for example, when you say, 'when the church* hath declared herself in any matter of opinion, or of rites; her declaration obliges all her children to peace and external obedience: nor is it fit, or lawful, for any private man to oppose his judgment to the public (as Luther and his fellows did). He may offer his opinion to be considered of, so he do it with evidence, or great probability of Scripture or reason, and very modestly, still containing himself within the dutiful respect which he oweth: but if he will factiously advance his own conceits (what! do you mean that they are his own conceits, and yet grounded upon evidence of Scripture?) and despise the church so far as to cut off her communion; he may be justly branded and condemned for a schismatic, yea a heretic also, in some degree, and *in foro exteriori*, though his opinion were true, and much more if it be false.' Could any man, even for a fee, have spoken more home to condemn your predecessors of schism, or heresy? Could they have stronger motives to oppose the doctrine of the church, and leave her communion, than evidence of Scripture? and yet, according to your

* Page 105.

own words, they should have answered, and rectified their conscience, by your doctrine, that though their opinion were true, and grounded upon evidence of Scripture or reason; yet it was not lawful for any private man to oppose his judgment to the public, which obligeth all Christians to peace and external obedience: and if they cast off the communion of the church for maintaining their own conceits, they may be branded for schismatics and heretics, in some degree, and *in foro exteriori*, that is, all other Christians ought so esteem of them, (and why then are we accounted uncharitable for judging so of you?) and they also are obliged to behave themselves in the face of all Christian churches, as if indeed they were not reformers, but schismatics and heretics, or as pagans and publicans. I thank you for your ingenuous confession: in recompence whereof, I will do a deed of charity, in putting you in mind, into what labyrinths you are brought, by teaching that the church may err in some points of faith, and yet that it is not lawful for any man to oppose his judgment, or leave her communion, though he have evidence of Scripture against her. Will you have such a man dissemble against his conscience, or externally deny a truth, known to be contained in Holy Scripture? How much more coherently do catholics proceed, who believe the universal infallibility of the church, and from thence are assured, that there can be no evidence of Scripture, or reason, against her definitions, nor any just cause to forsake her communion? Mr. Hooker, esteemed by many protestants an incomparable man, yields as much as we have alleged out of

you. 'The will of God is (saith he) to have* them to do whatsoever the sentence of judicial and final decision shall determine, yea, though it seem, in their private opinion, to swerve utterly from that which is right.' Doth not this man tell Luther, what the will of God was, which he transgressing must of necessity be guilty of schism? And must not Mr. Hooker either acknowledge the universal infallibility of the church, or else drive men into the perplexities and labyrinths of dissembling against their conscience, whereof now I speak? Not unlike to this, is your doctrine delivered elsewhere: 'Before the Nicene council (say you) many †good catholic bishops were of the same opinion with the Donatists, that the baptism of heretics was ineffectual: and with the Novatians, that the church ought not to absolve some grievous sinners. These errors therefore (if they had gone no further) were not in themselves heretical, especially in the proper, and most heavy, or bitter sense of that word; neither was it in the church's intention (or in her power) to make them such by her declaration. Her intention was to silence all disputes, and to settle peace and unity in her government, to which all wise and peaceable men submitted, whatsoever their opinion was. And those factious people, for their unreasonable and uncharitable opposition, were very justly branded for schismatics. For us, the mistake will never prove that we oppose any declaration of the catholic church, &c. and therefore he doth unjustly

* In his Pref. to his Books of Ecclesiastical Polity. Sect. 6. p. 28.

† Page 131.

charge us either with schism or heresy.' These words manifestly condemn your reformers, who opposed the visible church in many of her declarations, doctrines, and commands imposed upon them, for silencing all disputes, and settling peace and unity in her government; and therefore they, still remaining obstinately disobedient, are justly charged with schism and heresy. And it is to be observed, that you grant the Donatists to have been very justly branded for schismatics, although their opposition against the church did concern (as you hold) a point not fundamental to the faith, and which, according to St. Augustine, cannot be proved out of Scripture alone; and therefore, either doth evidently convince, that the church is universally infallible, even in points not fundamental; or else that it is schism, to oppose her declaration in those very things wherein she may err; and consequently, that Luther and his fellows were schismatics, by opposing the visible church for points not fundamental, though it were (untruly) supposed that she erred in such points. But, by the way, how come you on the sudden to hold the determination of a general council (of Nice) to be the declaration of the catholic church, seeing you teach, that general councils may err even fundamentally? And do you now say, with us, that to oppose the declaration of the church is sufficient that one may be branded with heresy, which is a point so often impugned by you?

43. "It is therefore most evident, that no pretended scruple of conscience could excuse Luther; which he might, and ought, to have rectified by means enough, if pride, ambition, obstinacy, &c. had given him leave. I grant he was touched

with scruple of conscience, but it was because he had forsaken the visible church of Christ; and I beseech all protestants, for the love they bear to that sacred ransom of their souls, the blood of our blessed Saviour, attentively to ponder, and unpartially to apply to their own conscience, what this man spoke concerning the feelings and remorse of his. 'How often (saith he) did my trembling heart* beat within me, and, reprehending me, object against me that most strong argument, Art thou only wise? Do so many worlds err? Were so many ages ignorant? What if thou errest, and drawest so many into hell to be damned eternally with thee?' And in another place he saith: 'Dost thou, who art but one, and of no † account, take upon thee so great matters? What, if thou, being but one, offendest? If God permit such, so many and all to err; why may he not permit thee to err? To this belong those arguments, the church, the church, the fathers, the fathers, the councils, the customs, the multitudes, and greatness of wise men: whom do not these mountains of arguments, these clouds, yea these seas of examples overthrow?' And these thoughts wrought so deep in his soul, that he often wished and desired that he had‡ never begun this business: wishing yet further that his writings were burned, and §buried in eternal oblivion. Behold what remorse Luther felt, and how he wanted no strength of malice to cross his own conscience: and therefore it was no

* Tom. ii. Germ. Jen. fol. 9. et tom. ii. Witt. of anno 1562. de abrog. Mis. privat. fol. 244.

† Tom. v. Annot breviss.

‡ Colloq. mensal. fol. 158.

§ Præfat. in tom. German. Jen.

scruple, or conceived obligation of conscience, but some other motives which induced him to oppose the church. And if yet you doubt of his courage to encounter, and strength to master, all reluctations of conscience, hear an example or two for that purpose. Of communion, under both kinds, thus he saith: 'If the council * should in any case decree this, least of all would we then use both kinds; yea, rather, in despite of the council and that decree, we would use either but one kind only, or neither, and in no case both.' Was not Luther persuaded in conscience, that to use neither kind was against our Saviour's command? Is this only to offer his opinion to be considered of, as you said all men ought to do? And, that you may be sure that he spoke from his heart, and if occasion had been offered, would have been as good as his word; mark what he saith of the elevation of the sacrament: 'I did know the † elevation of the sacrament to be idolatrical; yet nevertheless I did retain it in the church at Wirtemberg, to the end that I might vex the devil Carolostadius.' Was not this a conscience large and capacious enough, that could swallow idolatry? Why would he not tolerate idolatry in the church of Rome (as these men are wont to blaspheme) if he could retain it in his own church at Wirtemberg? If Carolostadius, Luther's offspring, was the devil, who but himself must be his dam? Is Almighty God wont to send such furies to preach the gospel? and yet, further (which makes most directly to the point

* De formula missæ.

† In parva Confess. Vid. Tan. tom. i. disput. 1. q. 2. dub. 4. n. 108.

in hand) Luther, in his book of abrogating the private mass exhorts the Augustine friars of Wirtemberg, who first abrogated the mass, that, even against their conscience accusing them, they should persist in what they had begun, acknowledging that in some things he himself had done the like. And Joannes Mathesius, a Lutheran preacher, saith: 'Antonius Musa, the parish priest* of Rocklitz, recounted to me, that on a time he heartily moaned himself to the Doctor (he means Luther) that he himself could not believe what he preached to others: and that Dr. Luther answered—Praise and thanks be to God, that this happens also to others, for I had thought it happened only to me.' Are not these conscionable and fit reformers? And can they be excused from schism, under pretence that they held themselves obliged to forsake the Roman church? If then it be damnable to proceed against one's conscience, what will become of Luther, who against his conscience persisted in his division from the Roman church?

and at length degenerates to heresy; as wine by long keeping grows to be vinegar, but not by continuance returns again to its former nature of wine. Thus St. Augustine saith, that 'heresy is schism* inveterate.' And in another place: 'We object to you only the † crime of schism; which you have also made to become heresy, by evil persevering therein.' And St. Jerome saith, 'Though schism ‡ in the beginning may be in some sort understood to be different from heresy; yet there is no schism which doth not feign to itself some heresy, that it may seem to have departed from the church upon just cause.' And so indeed it falleth out: for men may begin upon passion, but afterward, by instinct of corrupt nature, seeking to maintain their schism as lawful, they fall into some heresy, without which their separation could not be justified with any colour; as in our present case the very affirming, that it is lawful to continue a schism unlawfully begun, is an error against the main principle of Christianity, that it is not lawful for any Christian to live out of God's church, within which alone salvation can be had; or, that it is not damnable to disobey her decrees, according to the words of our Saviour: 'If he shall not hear § the church, let him be to thee as a pagan, or publican.' And, 'he that ‖ despiseth you, despiseth me.' We heard above Optatus Milevitanus saying to Parmenianus, that both he, and all those other, who continued in the schism

* Lib. ii. cont. Cres. c. vii.
† Ep. 164.
‡ Upon these words ad Tit. 3. Hæreticum hominem, &c.
§ Matt. xviii.
‖ Luke x. 16.

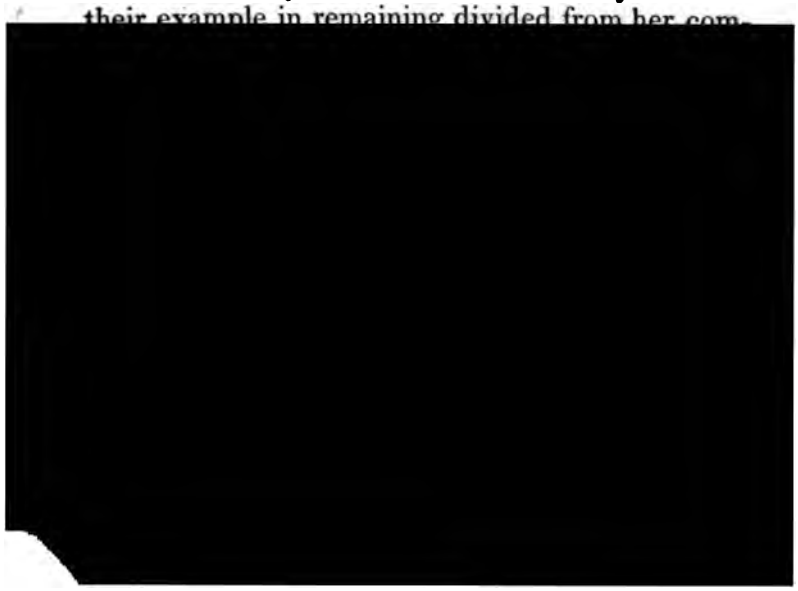
begun by Majorinus, did inherit their forefathers' schism; and yet Parmenianus was the third bishop after Majorinus in his see, and did not begin, but only continue the schism. 'For (saith this holy father) Cæcilianus * went not out of Majorinus, thy grandfather, but Majorinus from Cæcilianus: neither did Cæcilianus depart from the chair of Peter or Cyprian, but Majorinus, in whose chair thou sittest, which before Majorinus (Luther) had no beginning.' Seeing it is evident that these things passed in this manner (that, for example, Luther departed from the church, and not the church from Luther), it is clear that you be heirs both of the givers up of the Bible to be burned, and of schismatics. And the regal power, or example, of Henry the Eighth could not excuse his subjects from schism, according to what we have heard out of St. Chrysostome, saying—'Nothing doth so much provoke † the wrath of Almighty God, as that the church should be divided. Although we should do innumerable good deeds, if we divide the full ecclesiastical congregation, we shall be punished no less than they who did rend his natural body: for that was done to the gain of the whole world, though not with that intention; but this hath no good in it at all, but the greatest hurt riseth from it. These things are spoken not only to those who bear office, but to such also as are governed by them.' Behold, therefore, how liable both subjects and superiors are to the sin of schism, if they break the unity of God's church. The words of St. Paul can in no occasion be verified more than in this of which we

* Lib. i. cont. Parm. † Hom. 11. in ep. ad Eph.

speak. 'They who do such things* are worthy of death: and not only they that do them, but they also that consent with the doers.' In these things, which are indifferent of their own nature, custom may be occasion, that some act, not well begun, may in time come to be lawfully continued. But no length of time, no quality of persons, no circumstance of necessity, can legitimate actions which are of their own nature unlawful: and therefore division from Christ's mystical body being of the number of those actions, which divines teach to be *intrinsece malas*, evil of their own nature and essence, no difference of persons or time can ever make it lawful. Dr. Potter saith: 'There neither was, nor can be, any cause to depart from the church of Christ, no more than from Christ himself.' And who dares say, that it is not damnable to continue a separation from Christ? Prescription cannot in conscience run, when the first beginner, and his successors, are conscious that the thing to be prescribed; for example, goods or lands, were unjustly possessed at the first. Christians are not like strays, that, after a certain time of wandering from their right home, fall from their owner to the lord of the soil; but as long as they retain the indelible character of baptism, and live upon earth, they are obliged to acknowledge subjection to God's church. Human laws may come to nothing by discontinuance of time; but the law of God, commanding us to conserve unity in his church, doth still remain. The continued disobedience of children cannot deprive parents of their paternal right, nor can the grandchild be undutiful

* Rom. i. 32.

to his grandfather, because his father was unnatural to his own parent. The longer God's church is disobeyed; the profession of her doctrine denied; her sacraments neglected; her liturgy condemned; her unity violated; the more grievous the fault grows to be: as the longer a man withholds a due debt, or retains his neighbour's goods, the greater injustice he commits. Constancy in evil doth not extenuate, but aggravate, the same, which by extension of time receiveth increase of strength, and addition of greater malice. If these men's conceits were true, the church might come to be wholly divided by wicked schisms, and yet after some space of time none could be accused of schism, nor be obliged to return to the visible church of Christ: and so there should remain no one true visible church. Let therefore these men, who pretend to honour, reverence, and believe the doctrine and practice of the visible church, and to condemn their forefathers who forsook her, and say, they would not have done so, if they had lived in the days of their fathers, and yet follow their example in remaining divided from her com-



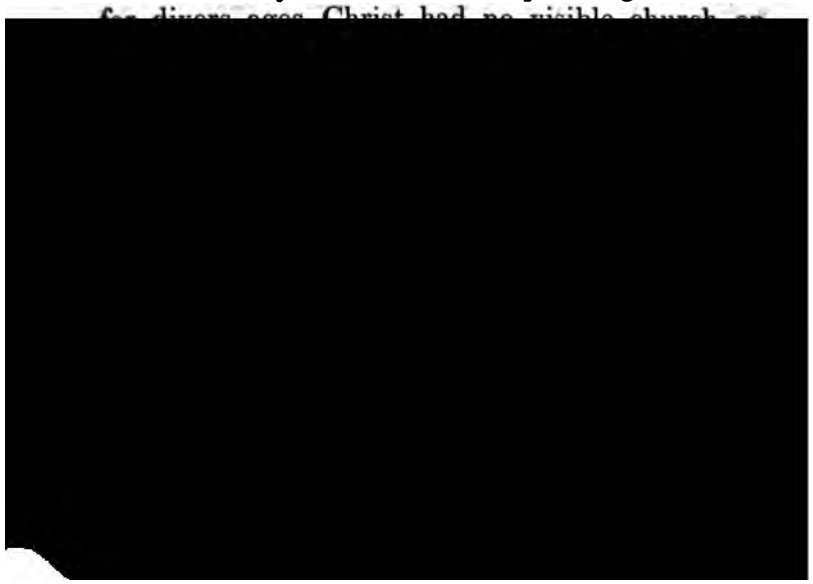
ther, his associates, and all that continue in the schism by them begun, are guilty of schism, by departing from the visible true church of Christ; it remaineth that we examine what in particular was that visible true church, from which they departed, that so they may know to what church in particular they ought to return: and then we shall have performed what was proposed to be handled in the fifth point.

V. Point. *Luther and the rest departed from the Roman church.*

47. " That the Roman church (I speak not for the present of the particular diocese of Rome, but of all visible churches dispersed throughout the whole world, agreeing in faith with the chair of Peter, whether that see were supposed to be in the city of Rome, or any other place:) that, I say, the church of Rome, in this sense, was the visible catholic church, out of which Luther departed, is proved by your own confession, who assign for notes of the true church the true preaching of God's word, and due administration of sacraments; both which for the substance you cannot deny to the Roman church, since you confess, that she wanted nothing fundamental, or necessary to salvation, and for that very cause you think to clear yourself from schism, whose property, as you say, 'is to cut off from the * body of Christ, and the hope of salvation, the church from which it separates.' Now that Luther and his fellows were born and baptized in the Roman

* Page 76.

church, and that she was the church, out of which they departed, is notoriously known: and therefore you cannot cut her off from the body of Christ, and hope of salvation, unless you will acknowledge yourself to deserve the just imputation of schism. Neither can you deny her to be truly catholic by reason of (pretended) corruptions, not fundamental. For yourself avouch, and endeavour to prove, that the true catholic church may err in such points. Moreover, I hope you will not so much as go about to prove, that when Luther arose there was any other visible church disagreeing from the Roman, and agreeing with protestants in their particular doctrines; and you cannot deny, but that England in those days agreed with Rome, and other nations with England; and therefore, either Christ had no visible church upon earth, or else you must grant that it was the church of Rome. A truth so manifest, that those protestants, who affirm the Roman church to have lost the nature and being of a true church, do by inevitable consequence grant, that



some may object, no man is ignorant that the Grecians, even the schismatical Grecians, do in most points agree with the Roman catholics, and disagree from the protestant Reformation. They teach transubstantiation (which point Dr. Potter* also confesseth); invocation of saints and angels; veneration of relics and images; auricular confession; enjoined satisfaction; confirmation with chrism; extreme unction; all the seven sacraments, prayer, sacrifice, alms for the dead; monachism, that priests may not marry after their ordination. In which, points that the Grecians agree with the Roman church appeareth by a treatise published by the protestant divines of Wirtemberg, entitled, 'Acta Theologorum Wirtembergensium, et Jeremiæ Patriarchæ Constantinop. de Augustana Confessione, &c. Wirtembergæ, Anno 1584.' by the protestant † Crispinus, and by Sir Edwin Sands in the relation of the state of religion of the west. And I wonder with what colour of truth (to say no worse) Dr. Potter could affirm that the doctrines debated between the protestants ‡ and Rome, are only the partial and particular fancies of the Roman church; unless happily the opinion of transubstantiation may be excepted, wherein the latter Grecians seem to agree with the Romanists. Beside the protestant authors, already cited, Petrus Arcudius, a Grecian and a learned catholic writer, had published a large volume, the argument and title whereof is: 'Of the Agreement of the Roman and Greek church in the seven Sacraments.' As for the heresy of the Grecians, that the Holy Ghost pro-

* Page 225. † De statu Eccles. p. 253. ‡ Page 225.

ceeds not from the Son, I suppose that protestants disavow them in that error, as we do.

49. "Dr. Potter will not (I think so much wrong his reputation, as to tell us, that the Waldenses, Wickcliffe, Huss, or the like, were protestants, because in some things they disagreed from catholics; for he well knows that the example of such men is subject to these manifest exceptions. They were not of all ages, nor in all countries, but confined to certain places, and were interrupted in time against the notion and nature of the word *catholic*. They had no ecclesiastical hierarchy, nor succession of bishops, priests, and pastors. They differed among themselves, and from protestants also. They agreed in divers things with us against protestants. They held doctrines manifestly absurd, and damnable heresies.

50. "The Waldenses began not before the year 1218; so far were they from universality of all ages. For their doctrine, First, They denied all judgments which extended to the drawing of blood, and the sabbath, for which cause they were called In-sabbatists. Secondly, They taught that laymen and women might consecrate the sacrament, and preach (no doubt but by this means to make their master Waldo, a mere laymen, capable of such functions). Thirdly, That clergymen ought to have no possessions or properties. Fourthly, That there should be no division of parishes, nor churches; for a walled church they reputed as a barn. Fifthly, That men ought not to take an oath in any case. Sixthly, That those persons sinned mortally, who accompanied without hope of issue. Seventhly, They held all things done above the

girdle, by kissing, touching, words, compression of the breasts, &c. to be done in charity, and not against continency. Eighthly, That neither priest, nor civil magistrate, being guilty of mortal sin, did enjoy their dignity, or were to be obeyed. Ninthly, They condemned princes and judges. Tenthly, They affirmed singing in the church to be a hellish clamour. Eleventhly, They taught that men might dissemble their religion, and so accordingly they went to catholic churches, dissembling their faith, and made offertories, confessions, and communions, after a dissembling manner. 'Waldo was so unlearned (saith Fox *) he gave rewards to certain learned men to translate the Holy Scripture for him, and being thus holpen did (as the same Fox there reporteth) confer the form of religion in his time to the infallible word of God.' A goodly example, for such as must needs have the Scripture in English, to be read by every simple body, which such fruit of godly doctrine as we have seen in the aforesaid gross heresies of Waldo. The followers of Waldo were like their master, so unlearned, that 'some of them (saith Fox †) expounded the words,' Joan. 1. *Sui eum non receperunt:* swine did not receive him.' And, to conclude, they agreed in divers things with catholics against protestants, as may be seen in Brerely,‡

51. "Neither can it be pretended that these are slanders forged by catholics. For, besides that the same things are testified by protestant writers, as Illyricus, Cowper, and others, our authors can-

* Act. Mon. p. 628. † Ibid.

‡ Tract. 2. cap. ii. sect. sub. 3.

not be suspected of partiality in disfavour of protestants, unless you would say, perhaps, that they were prophets, and some hundred years ago, did both foresee that there were to be protestants in the world, and that such protestants were to be like the Waldenses. Besides, from whence, but from our historians, are protestants come to know, that there were any such men as the Waldenses? And that in some points they agreed with the protestants, and disagreed from them in others? And upon what ground can they believe our author, for that part wherein the Waldenses were like to protestants, and imagine they lied in the rest?

52. " Neither could Wickliffe continue a church never interrupted from the time of the Waldenses, after whom he lived more than one hundred and fifty years; to wit, in the year 1371. He agreed with catholics about the worshipping of relics and images; and about the intercession of our blessed lady, the ever-immaculate mother of God: he went so far as to say, ' It seems to me *impossible, that we should be rewarded without the intercession of the Virgin Mary.' He held seven sacraments, purgatory, and other points. And against both catholics and protestants he maintained sundry damnable doctrines, as divers protestant writers relate. As, First, If a bishop, or priest, be in deadly sin, he doth not indeed either give orders, consecrate, or baptize. Secondly, That ecclesiastical ministers ought not to have any temporal possessions, nor property in any thing, but should beg; and yet he himself brake into heresy, because he had been deprived by the

* In serm. de assump. Mariæ.

Archbishop of Canterbury of a certain benefice, as all schisms and heresies begin upon passion, which they seek to cover with the cloak of reformation. Thirdly, He condemned lawful oaths, like the anabaptists. Fourthly, He taught that all things came to pass by absolute necessity. Fifthly, He defended human merits as the wicked Pelagians did; namely, as proceeding from natural forces, without the necessary help of God's grace. Sixthly, That no man is a civil magistrate, while he is in mortal sin, and that people may at their pleasure correct princes when they offend; by which doctrine he proves himself both a heretic and a traitor.

53. " As for Huss, his chiefest doctrines were: that lay-people must receive in both kinds; and that civil lords, prelates, and bishops, lose all right and authority while they are in mortal sin. For other things he wholly agreed with catholics against protestants; and the Bohemians, his followers, being demanded in what points they disagreed from the church of Rome, propounded only these:—The necessity of communion under both kinds—That all civil dominion was forbidden to the clergy—That preaching of the word was free for all men, and in all places—That open crimes were in no wise to be permitted, for avoiding of greater evil. By these particulars, it is apparent that Huss agreed with protestants against us, in one only point of both kinds, which, according to Luther, is a thing indifferent; because he teacheth, that ' Christ in this matter * commanded nothing as necessary.' And he saith further: ' If

* In Epist. ad Bohemos.

thou come to a place where * one only kind is administered, use one kind only as others do.' Melancthon, likewise, holds it a thing † indifferent; and the same is the opinion of some other protestants. All which considered, it is clear, that protestants cannot challenge the Waldenses, Wickliffe, and Huss, for members of their church; and although they could, yet that would advantage them little towards the finding out a perpetual visible church of theirs, for the reasons above ‡ specified.

54. " If Dr. Potter would go so far off, as to fetch the Muscovites, Armenians, Georgians, Æthiopians, or Abyssines into his church, they would prove over-dear bought; for they either hold the damnable heresy of Eutyches, or use circumcision, or agree with the Greek or Roman church. And it is most certain that they have nothing to do with the doctrine of protestants.

55. " It being, therefore, granted that Christ had a visible church in all ages, and that there can be none assigned but the church of Rome; it follows, that she is the true catholic church, and that those pretended corruptions for which they forsook her, are indeed Divine truths, delivered by the visible catholic church of Christ. And that Luther and his followers departed from her, and consequently are guilty of schism, by dividing themselves from the communion of the Roman church. Which is clearly convinced out of Dr. Potter himself, although the Roman church were but a particular church. For he saith: 'whosoever professes § him-

* De utraque specie Sacram. † In cent. Epist. Theol. p. 225.
‡ Num. 49. § Page 76.

self to forsake the communion of any one member of the body of Christ, must confess himself consequently to forsake the whole.' Since therefore, in the same place, he expressly acknowledges the church of Rome to be a member of the body of Christ, and that it is clear they have forsaken her; it evidently follows, that they have forsaken the whole, and therefore are most properly schismatics.

56. " And, lastly, since the crime of schism is so grievous, that, according to the doctrine of holy fathers rehearsed above, no multitude of good works, no moral honesty of life, no cruel death endured even for the profession of some article of faith, can excuse any one who is guilty of that sin from damnation; I leave it to be considered, whether it be not true charity to speak as we believe, and to believe as all antiquity hath taught us, that whosoever either begins, or continues a division from the Roman church, which we have proved to be Christ's true militant church on earth, cannot without effectual repentance hope to be a member of his triumphant church in heaven. And so I conclude with these words of blessed St. Augustine: 'it * is common to all heretics to be unable to see that thing which in the world is most manifest, and placed in the light of all nations; out of whose unity whatsoever they work, though they seem to do it with great care and diligence, can no more avail them against the wrath of God, than the spider's web against the extremity of cold.' But now it is high time that we treat of the other sort of division from the church, which is by heresy."

* Cont. Parm. lib. ii. c. iii.

ANSWER TO THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The separation of protestants from the Roman church, being upon just and necessary causes, is not any way guilty of schism.

1. Ad §. 1—7. In the seven first sections of this chapter there be many things said, and many things supposed by you which are untrue, and deserve a censure. As,

2. First,—That schism could not be a division from the church, or that a division from the church could not happen, unless there always had been, and should be, a visible church.—Which assertion is a manifest falsehood; for although there never had been a church visible or invisible before this age, nor should be ever after, yet this could not hinder but that a schism might now be, and be a division from the present visible church. As though in France there never had been until now a lawful monarch, nor after him ever should be; yet this hinders not, but that now there might be a rebellion, and that rebellion might be an insurrection against sovereign authority.

3. That it is a point to be granted by all Christians, that in all ages there hath been a visible congregation of faithful people.—Which proposition, howsoever you understand it, is not absolutely certain. But if you mean by faithful, (as it is plain you do) free from all error in faith, then you

know all protestants with one consent affirm it to be false; and therefore without proof to take it for granted, is to beg the question.

4. That supposing Luther, and they which did first separate from the Roman church, were guilty of schism, it is certainly consequent, that all who persist in this division, must be so likewise.—Which is not so certain as you pretend. For they, which alter, without necessary cause, the present government of any state, civil or ecclesiastical, do commit a great fault; whereof notwithstanding they may be innocent, who continue this alteration, and to the utmost of their power oppose a change, though to the former state, when continuance of time hath once settled the present. Thus have I known some of your own church condemn the low countrymen, who first revolted from the King of Spain, of the sin of rebellion; yet absolve them from it, who now being of your religion, there are yet faithful maintainers of the common liberty against the pretences of the King of Spain.

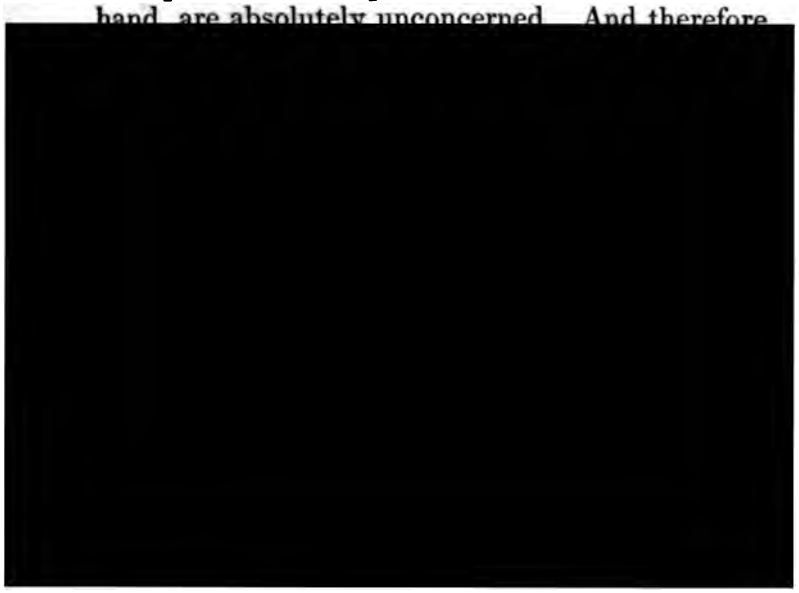
5. Fourthly—That all those which a Christian is to esteem neighbours do concur to make one company, which is the church.—Which is false; for a Christian is to esteem those his neighbours, who are not members of the true church.

6. Fifthly—That all the members of the visible church are by charity united into one mystical body.—Which is manifestly untrue; for many of them have no charity.

7. Sixthly—That the catholic church signifies one company of faithful people.—Which is repugnant to your own grounds: for you require, not true faith, but only the profession of it, to make men members of the visible church.

8. Seventhly—That every heretic is a schismatic.—Which you must acknowledge false in those, who though they deny, or doubt of some point professed by your church, and so are heretics; yet continue still in the communion of the church.

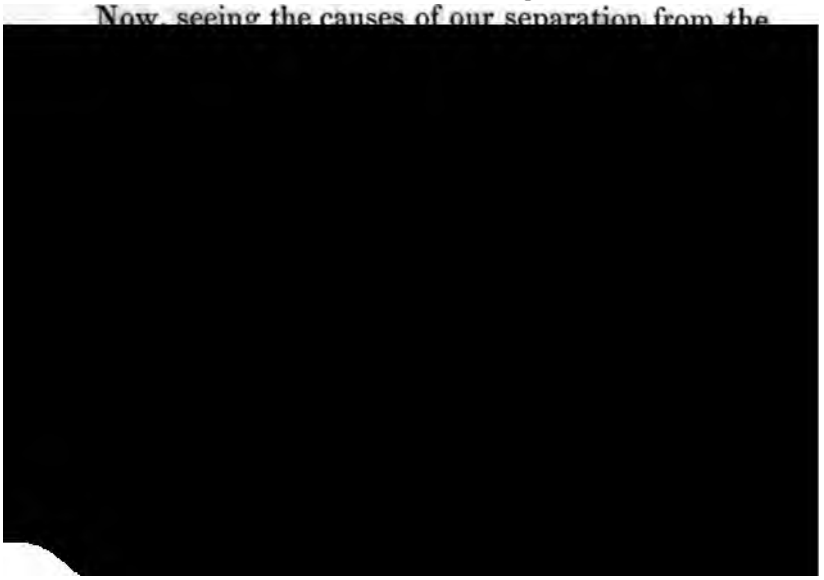
9. Eighthly—That all the members of the catholic church, must of necessity be united in external communion.—Which, though it were much to be desired it were so, yet certainly cannot be perpetually true. For a man unjustly excommunicated, is not in the church's communion, yet he is still a member of the church. And divers times it hath happened, as in the case of Chrysostome and Epiphanius, that particular men and particular churches have upon an overvalued difference, either renounced communion mutually, or one of them separated from the other, and yet both have continued members of the catholic church. These things are in those seven sections, either said or supposed by you untruly, without all shew, or pretence of proof. The rest is impertinent common place, wherein protestants, and the cause in hand are absolutely unconcerned. And therefore



there is no necessity to divide unity: to let pass your want of diligence, in quoting the sixty-second chapter of that book, which hath but twenty-three in it; to pass by also, that these words, which are indeed in the eleventh chapter, are not inferred out of any such premises as you pretend: this, I say, is evident, that he says not absolutely, that there never is or can be any necessity to divide unity, (which only were for your purpose,) but only in such a special case as he there sets down; that is, 'when good men tolerate bad men, which can do them no spiritual hurt, to the intent they may not be separated from those, who are spiritually good; then (saith he) there is no necessity to divide unity.' Which very words do clearly give us to understand, that it may fall out (as it doth in our case,) that we cannot keep unity with bad men without spiritual hurt; *i. e.* without partaking with them in their impieties, and that then there is a necessity to divide unity from them; I mean to break off conjunction with them in their impieties. Which, that it was St. Augustine's mind, it is most evident out of the twenty-first chapter of the same book; whereto Parmenian demanding, 'How can a man remain pure, being joined with those that are corrupted?' He answers, 'Very true, this is not possible, if he be joined with them; that is, if he commit any evil with them, or favour them which do commit it. But if he do neither of these he is not joined with them.' And, presently after, 'These two things retained, will keep such men pure and uncorrupted; that is, neither doing ill, nor approving it.' And therefore seeing you impose upon all men of your communion a necessity of doing, or at least

approving many things unlawful, certainly there lies upon us an unavoidable necessity of dividing unity, either with you, or with God; and whether of these is rather to be done, be ye judges.

11. Irenæus, also, says not simply (which only would do you service), "There cannot possibly be any so important reformation, as to justify a separation from them who will not reform; but only, they cannot make any corruption so great, as is the perniciousness of a schism." Now, *they*, here, is a relative, and hath an antecedent expressed in Irenæus, which, if you had been pleased to take notice of, you would easily have seen, that what Irenæus says, falls heavy upon the church of Rome, but touching protestants nothing at all. For the men he speaks of, are such as *propter modicas et quaslibet causas*, for trifling or small causes divide the body of Christ; such as speak of peace, and make war; such as strain at gnats, and swallow camels. "And these (saith he) can make no reformation of any such importance, as to countervail the danger of a division." Now, seeing the causes of our separation from the



"Not about any catholic doctrine, but only a ceremony, or rather about the time of observing it:" so Petavius values it: which was just all one, as if the church of France should excommunicate those of their own religion in England, for not keeping Christmas upon the same day with them. And seeing he was reprehended sharply and bitterly for it, by most of the bishops of the world, as Eusebius* testifies, and (as Cardinal Perron,† though mincing the matter, yet confesseth) by this very Irenæus himself in particular admonished, that for so small a cause *(propter tam modicam causam)* he should not have cut off so many provinces from the body of the church: and, lastly, seeing the ecclesiastical story of those times mentions no other notable example of any such schismatical presumption, but this of Victor, certainly we have great inducement to imagine, that Irenæus, in this place by you quoted, had a special aim at the bishop and church of Rome. Once, this I am sure of, that the place fits him, and many of his successors, as well as if it had been made purposely for them. And this also, that he which finds fault with them who separate upon small causes, implies clearly that he conceived there might be such causes as were great and sufficient; and that then a reformation was to be made, notwithstanding any danger of division that might insue upon it.

12. Lastly—St. Dennis of Alexandria, says indeed, and very well that "all things should be rather endured, than we should consent to the division of the church:"—I would add, rather than con-

* Euseb. Hist. l. 5. c. xxiv. † Perron Replic. l. 3. c. ii.

sent to the continuation of the division, if it might be remedied. But then I am to tell you, that he says not—all things should rather be done—but only, "all things should rather be endured or suffered:" wherein he speaks not of the evil of sin, but of pain and misery; not of tolerating either error or sin in others, (though that may be lawful) much less of joining with others for quietness' sake, (which only were to your purpose) in the profession of error and practice of sin, but of suffering any affliction, nay, even martyrdom in our own persons, rather than consent to the division of the church. *Omnia incommoda,* so your own Christopherson, enforced by the circumstances of the place, translates Dionysius's words: "All miseries should rather be endured than we should consent to the church's division."

13. Ad §. 9. In the next paragraph you affirm two things, but prove neither, unless a vehement asseveration may pass for a weak truth. You tell us, first, that "the doctrine of the total deficiency of the visible church, which is maintained by divers chief protestants, implies in it vast absurdity, or rather sacrilegious blasphemy." But neither do the protestants alleged by you maintain the deficiency of the visible church, but only of the church's visibility, or of the church as it is visible, which so acute a man as you, now that you are minded of it, I hope, will easily distinguish: neither do they hold, that the visible church hath failed totally, and from its essence, but only from its purity: and that it fell into many corruptions, but yet not to nothing. And yet, if they had held, that there was not only no pure visible church, but none at all; surely they had said

more than they could justify; but yet you do not shew, neither can I discover any such vast absurdity or sacrilegious blasphemy in this assertion. You say, secondly, that the reason, which cast them upon this wicked doctrine, was a desperate voluntary necessity, because they were resolved not to acknowledge the Roman to be the true church, and were convinced, by all manner of evidence, that for divers ages before Luther there was no other. But this is not to dispute, but to divine, and take upon you the property of God, which is to know the hearts of men. For why, I pray, might not the reason hereof rather be, because they were convinced by all manner of evidence, as Scripture, reason, antiquity, that all the visible churches in the world, but above all the Roman, had degenerated from the purity of the gospel of Christ, and thereupon did conclude there was no visible church, meaning, by no church, none free from corruption, and conformable in all things to the doctrine of Christ.

14. Ad §. 10. Neither is there any repugnance (but in words only) between these, as you are pleased to style them, exterminating spirits, and those other, whom out of courtesy you entitle in your 10th §. more moderate protestants. For these, affirming the perpetual visibility of the church, yet neither deny nor doubt of her being subject to manifold and grievous corruptions, and those, of such a nature, as, were they not mitigated by invincible, or at least a very probable, ignorance, none subject to them could be saved. And they, on the other side, denying the church's visibility, yet plainly affirm, that they conceive very good hope of the salvation of many of their

ignorant and honest forefathers. Thus declaring plainly, though in words they denied the visibility of the true church, yet their meaning was not to deny the perpetuity, but the perpetual purity and incorruption of the visible church.

15. Ad §. 11. Let us proceed therefore to your 11th §. where though Dr. Potter and other protestants granting the church's perpetual visibility, make it needless for you to prove it, yet you will needs be doing that which is needless. But you do it so coldly and negligently, that it is very happy for you that Dr. Potter did grant it.

16. For—What if the prophets speak more obscurely of Christ, than of the church? What if they had foreseen that greater contentions would arise about the church than Christ?—Which yet, he that is not a mere stranger in the story of the church must needs know to be untrue, and therefore not to be foreseen by the prophets. What if we have manifestly received the church from the Scriptures: does it follow from any, or all these things, that the church of Christ may always be visible?

17. Besides, what protestants ever granted (that which you presume upon so confidently,) that "every man for all the affairs of his soul must have recourse to some congregation?" If some one Christian lived alone among pagans in some country, remote from Christendom, shall we conceive it impossible for this man to be saved, because he cannot have recourse to any congregation for the affairs of his soul? Will it not be sufficient, for such an one's salvation, to know the doctrine of Christ, and live according to it? Such fancies as these, you do very wisely to take for granted, because you know well it is hard to prove them.

18. Let it be as unlawful as you please, to deny and dissemble matters of faith. Let them that do so, not be a church, but a damned crew of sycophants: what is this to the visibility of the church? May not the church be invisible, and yet these that are of it profess their faith? No, say you: their profession will make them visible. Very true, visible in the places where, and in the times when, they live, and to those persons unto whom they have necessary occasion to make their profession: but not visible to all, or any great, or considerable part of the world while they live, much less conspicuous to all ages after them. Now it is a church thus illustriously and conspicuously visible that you require: by whose splendour all men may be directed and drawn to repair to her, for the affairs of their souls: neither is it the visibility of the church absolutely, but this degree of it, which the most rigid protestants deny: which is plain enough, out of the places of Napper, cited by you in the ninth part of this chapter. Where his words are, "God hath withdrawn his visible church from open assemblies to the hearts of particular godly men." And this church which hath not open assemblies, he calls the latent and invisible church. Now, I hope, papists in England will be very apt to grant men may be so far latent and invisible, as not to profess their faith in open assemblies, nor to proclaim it to all the world, and yet not deny, nor dissemble it? Nor deserve to be esteemed a "damned crew of dissembling sycophants."

19. But, preaching of the word, and administration of the sacraments, cannot but make a church visible: and these are inseparable notes

of the church.—I answer, they are so far inseparable, that wheresoever they are, there a church is: but not so, but that in some cases there may be a church, where these notes are not. Again, these notes will make the church visible: but to whom? Certainly not to all men, nor to most men; but to them only to whom the word is preached, and the sacraments administered. They make the church visible, to whom themselves are visible, but not to others. As were your sacraments are administered, and your doctrine preached, it is visible that there is a popish church. But this may, perhaps, be visible to them only, who are present at these performances, and to others as secret, as if they had never been performed.

20. But St. Augustine saith, it is an impudent, abominable, detestable speech, &c. to say, the church hath perished.—I answer, 1. All that St. Augustine says is not true. 2. Though this were true, it were nothing to your purpose, unless you will conceive it all one, not to be, and not to be conspicuously visible. 3. This very speech, that the church perished, might be false and impudent in the Donatists, and yet not so in the protestants. For there is no incongruity, that what hath lived five hundred years, may perish in sixteen hundred. But St. Augustine denieth not only the actual perishing, but the possibility of it: and not only of its falling to nothing, but of its falling into corruption. I answer, though no such thing appears out of those places, yet, I believe, heat of disputation against the Donatists, and a desire to over-confute them transported him so far, as to urge against them more than was necessary, and perhaps more than was true.

But where he now revived, and did but confront the doctrine of after-ages with that, his own experience would enforce him to change his opinion. As concerning the last speech of St. Augustine, I cannot but wonder very much, why he should think it absurd for any man to say, there are sheep which he knows not, but God knows; and no less at you, for obtruding this sentence upon us, as pertinent proof of the church's visibility.

21. Neither do I see, how the truth of any present church depends upon the perpetual visibility, nay, nor upon the perpetuity of that which is past or future: for what sense is there, that it should not be in the power of God Almighty, to restore to a flourishing estate, a church which oppression had made invisible? to repair that which is ruined, to reform that which was corrupted, or to revive that which was dead? Nay, what reason is there, but that by ordinary means this may be done, so long as the Scriptures, by Divine Providence, are preserved in their integrity and authority? As a commonwealth, though never so far collapsed and over-run with disorders, is yet in possibility of being reduced into its original state, so long as the ancient laws, and fundamental constitutions are extant, and remain inviolate, from whence men may be directed how to make such a reformation. But St. Augustine urges this very argument against the Donatists, and therefore it is good. I answer that I doubt much of the consequence; and my reason is, because you yourselves acknowledge, that even general councils (and therefore much more particular doctors), though infallible in their determinations, are yet in their reasons and arguments, whereupon they

ground them, subject to like passions and errors with other men.

22. Lastly, Whereas you say, that all divines define schism, a division from the true church, and from thence collect that there must be a known church from which it is possible for men to depart: I might very justly question your antecedent, and desire you to consider, whether schism be not rather, or at least be not as well a division of the church as from it? A separation, not of a part from the whole, but of some parts from the other. And if you liked not this definition, I might desire you to inform me in those many schisms, which have happened in the church of Rome, which of the parts was the church, and which was divided from it: but, to let this pass, certainly your consequence is most unreasonable. For though whensoever there is a schism, it must necessarily suppose a church existent there; yet sure we may define a schism, that is, declare what the word signifies (for defining is no more) though at this present there was neither schism nor church in the world. Unless you will say, that we cannot tell what a rose is, or what the word rose signifies, but only in the summer when we have roses: or that in the world to come when men shall not marry, it is impossible to know what it is to marry: or that the plague is not a disease, but only when some body is infected: or that adultery is not a sin, unless there be adulterers: or that before Adam had a child, he knew not, and God could not have told him, what it was to be a father. Certainly, Sir, you have forgot your metaphysics, which you so much glory in, if you know not that the connexions of essential

predicates with their subjects are eternal, and depend not at all upon the actual existence of the thing defined. This definition therefore of schism, concludes not the existence of a church, even when it is defined: much less the perpetual continuance of it, and least of all the continuance of it in perpetual visibility and purity, which is the only thing that we deny, and you are to prove. By this time, you perceive, I hope, that I had reason to say that it was well for you, that Dr. Potter granted the church's perpetual visibility: for aught I can perceive, this concession of his is the best stake in your hedge, the best pillar upon which this conclusion stands; which yet is the only groundwork of your whole accusation.

23. Ad §. 12. 47—55. The remainder of this chapter, to convince Luther, and all that follow him, to be schismatics, affords us arguments of two sorts: the first, drawn from the nature of the thing; the second, from Dr. Potter's words and acknowledgment. So that the former, if they be good, must be good against all protestants; the latter only against Dr. Potter. I will examine them all, and do not doubt to make it appear even to yourself, if you have any indifference, that there is not any sound and concluding reason amongst them, but that they are all poor and miserable sophisms.

24. First, then, to prove us schismatics, you urge from the nature of schism this only argument:

> Whosoever leave the external communion of the visible church, are schismatics: but Luther and his followers left the external communion

of the visible church of Christ, therefore they are schismatics.

The major of this syllogism you leave naked, without proof; and conceive it, as it should seem, able enough to shift for itself. The minor, or second proposition of this argument, you prove by two other. The first is this:

They which forsook the external communion of all visible churches, must needs forsake the external communion of the true visible church of Christ: but Luther and his followers forsook the external communion of all visible churches, therefore they forsook the external communion of the true visible church.

The major of this syllogism you take for granted, as you have reason: the minor you prosecute with great pomp of words, and prove with plenty of reasons, built upon the confessions of Dr. Potter, Luther, Calvin, and other protestants; and this you do in the 12th §. of this chapter.

The second argument, to prove the assumption of your first syllogism, stands thus:

preaching of the word, and due administration of the sacraments; therefore she was the true church.

The antecedent is proved; because Dr. Potter confesses she wanted nothing fundamental or necessary to salvation; therefore, for the substance of the matter, she had these notes:

2. Either the Roman church was the true visible church, or protestants can name and prove some other, disagreeing from the Roman, and agreeing with protestants in their particular doctrines; or else they must say—there was no visible church; but they will not say, there was no church. They cannot name and prove any other disagreeing from the Roman, and agreeing with protestants, in their particular doctrines; because this cannot be the Greek church, nor that of the Waldenses, Wickliffites, Hussites, nor that of the Muscovites, Armenians, Georgians, Æthiopians, which you confirm by several arguments; therefore they must grant, that the Roman church was the true visible church.

And this is the business of your 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, and 55th sections of this chapter.

25. Now to all this I answer very briefly thus: That you have played the unwise builder, and erected a stately structure upon a false foundation. For, whereas, you take for granted as an undoubted truth, that whosoever leave the external communion of the visible church, are schismatical; I tell you, Sir, you presume too much upon us, and would have us grant that which is the main point in question: for, either you suppose the external communion of the church cor-

rupted, and that there was a necessity for them that would communicate with this church to communicate in her corruptions; or, you suppose her communion uncorrupted. If the former, and yet will take for granted, that all are schismatics, that leave her communion though it be corrupted, you beg the question in your proposition. If the latter, you beg the question in your supposition; for protestants, you know, are peremptory and unanimous in the denial of both these things; both that the communion of the visible church was then uncorrupted, and that they are truly schismatics who leave the communion of the visible church if corrupted; especially, if the case be so (and Luther's was so) that they must either leave her communion, or of necessity communicate with her in her corruptions. You will say, perhaps, that you have already proved it impossible, that the church or her communion should be corrupted: and, therefore, that they are schismatics, who leave the external communion of the visible church because she cannot be corrupted. And that hereafter you will prove, that corruptions in the church's communion, though the belief and profession of them be made the condition of her communion, cannot justify a separation from it; and, therefore, that they are schismatics, who leave the church's communion though corrupted.—I answer, that I have examined your proofs of the former, and found that a vein of sophistry runs clean through them; and, for the latter, it is so plain and palpable a falsehood, that I cannot but be confident, whatsoever you bring in proof of it, will, like the apples of Sodom, fall to ashes upon the first touch. And this is my first and main ex-

ception against your former discourse; that, accusing protestants of a very great and horrible crime, you have proved your accusation only with a fallacy.

26. Another is, that, although it were granted schism, to leave the external communion of the visible church in what state or case soever it be, and that Luther and his followers were schismatics, for leaving the external communion of all visible churches; yet you fail exceedingly of clearing the other necessary point undertaken by you, that the Roman church was then the visible church. For, neither do protestants (as you mistake) make the true preaching of the word, and due administration of the sacraments, the notes of the visible church, but only of a visible church: now these you know are very different things; the former signifying the church catholic, or the whole church; the latter, a particular church, or a part of the catholic. And, therefore, suppose out of courtesy we should grant, what by argument you can never evince, that your church has these notes, yet would it by no means follow, that your church were the visible church, but only a visible church; not the whole catholic, but only a part of it. But then, besides, where doth Dr. Potter acknowledge any such matter as you pretend? Where doth he say, that you had for the substance—the true preaching of the word, or due administration of the sacraments? Or where does he say, that (from which you collect this)—you wanted nothing fundamental or necessary to salvation? He says, indeed, that though your errors were in themselves damnable, and full of great impiety, yet he hopes, that those amongst

you, that were invincibly ignorant of the truth, might, by God's great mercy, have their errors pardoned, and their souls saved. And this is all he says, and this you confess to be all he says in* divers places of your book; which is no more than yourself do and must affirm of protestants; and yet I believe, you will not suffer us to infer from hence, that you grant protestants to have, for the substance, the true preaching of the word and due administration of the sacraments, and want nothing fundamental or necessary to salvation. And if we should draw this consequence from your concession, certainly we should do you injury, in regard many things may, in themselves and in ordinary course, be necessary to salvation, to those that have means to attain them, as your church generally hath; which yet, by accident, to these which were, by some impregnable impediment, debarred in these means, may by God's mercy be made unnecessary.

27. Lastly, Whereas you say, that protestants must either grant that your church then was the

manner say we, we acknowledge a church there was, corrupted indeed universally; but yet, such a one as we hope, by God's gracious acceptance, was still a church. We pretend not to name any one society that was this church; and yet we see no reason that can enforce us to confess that yours was the church, but only a part of it, and that one of the worst then extant in the world. In vain, therefore, have you troubled yourself, in proving that we cannot pretend, that either the Greeks, Waldenses, Wickliffites, Hussites, Muscovites, Armenians, Georgians, Abyssines, were then the visible church. For all this discourse proceeds upon a false and vain supposition, and begs another point in question between us, which is, that some church of one denomination and one communion (as the Roman, the Greek, &c.) must be always exclusively to all other communions the whole visible church. And though, perhaps, some weak protestant having the false principle settled in him, that there was to be always some visible church of one denomination, pure from all error in doctrine, might be wrought upon and prevailed with by it, to forsake the church of protestants; yet why it should induce him to go to yours, rather than the Greek church, or any other pretenders to perpetual succession as well as yours, that I do not understand; unless it be for the reason which Æneas Sylvius gave, why more held the pope above a council, than a council above the pope; which was, because popes did give bishopricks and archbishopricks, but councils gave none; and, therefore, suing in *forma pauperis*, were not like to have their cause very well maintained. For put the case, I should

grant of mere favour, that there must be always some church of one denomination or communion free from all errors in doctrine, and that protestants had not always such a church: it would follow, indeed, from hence, that I must not be a protestant; but that I must be a papist, certainly it would follow by no better consequence than this—if you will leave England, you must of necessity go to Rome. And yet with this wretched fallacy have I been sometimes abused myself, and known many other poor souls seduced, not only from their own church and religion, but unto yours: I beseech God to open the eyes of all that love the truth, that they may not always be held captive, under such miserable delusions.

28. We see, then, how successful you have been in making good your accusation, with reasons drawn from the nature of the thing, and which may be urged in common against all protestants. Let us come now to the arguments of the other kind, which you build upon Dr. Potter's own words, out of which you promise unanswerable reasons to convince the protestants of schism.

29. But let the understanding reader take with him three or four short remembrances, and I dare say he will find them, upon examination, not only answerable, but already answered. The memorandums I would commend to him are these:

30. 1. That not every separation, but only a causeless separation, from the external communion of any church, is the sin of schism.

31. 2. That imposing upon men, under pain of excommunication, a necessity of professing known errors, and practising known corruptions, is a sufficient and necessary cause of separation; and that

this is the cause which protestants allege to justify their separation from the church of Rome.

32. 3. That to leave the church, and to leave the external communion of a church, at least, as Dr. Potter understands the word, is not the same thing: that, being done by ceasing to be a member of it, by ceasing to have those requisites which constitute a man a member of it, as faith and obedience: this, by refusing to communicate with any church in her liturgies and public worship of God. This little armour, if it be rightly placed, I am persuaded will repel all those batteries which you threaten shall be so furious.

33. Ad §. 13—15. The first is a sentence of St. Augustine against Donatus, applied to Luther thus: "If the church perished, what church brought forth Donatus? (you say, Luther?) If she could not perish, what madness moved the sect of Donatus to separate, upon pretence to avoid the communion of bad men?" Whereunto, one fair answer (to let pass many others) is obvious out of the second observation: that this sentence, though it were gospel, as it is not, is impertinently applied to Luther and Lutherans, whose pretence of separation (be it true or be it false) was not (as that of the Donatists) only to avoid the communion of bad men; but to free themselves from a necessity (which but by separating was unavoidable) of joining with bad men in their impieties. And your not substituting Luther, instead of Donatus, in the latter part of the dilemma, as well as in the former, would make a suspicious man conjecture that you yourself took notice of this exception of disparity between Donatus and Luther.

34. Ad §. 16. Your second onset drives only

at those protestants, who hold the true church was invisible for many ages. Which doctrine (if by the true church be understood the pure church, as you do understand it) is a certain truth; and it is easier for you to declaim (as you do) than to dispute against it. But "these men (you say) must be heretics, because they separate from the communion of the visible church: and therefore also from the communion of that which they say was invisible, inasmuch as the invisible church communicated with the visible."

35. *Ans.* I might very justly desire some proof of that which so confidently you take for granted: that there were no persecuted and oppressed maintainers of the truth in the days of our forefathers, but only such as dissembled their opinions, and lived in your communion. And truly, if I should say there were many of this condition, I suppose I could make my affirmative much more probable, than you can make your negative. We read in Scripture, that Elias conceived there was none left beside himself in the whole kingdom of Israel, who had not revolted from God; and yet God himself assures us that he was deceived. And if such a man, a prophet, and one of the greatest, erred in his judgment touching his own time, and his own country, why may not you, who are certainly but a man, and subject to the same passions as Elias was, mistake in thinking, that in former ages, in some country or other, there were not always some good Christians, which did not so much as externally bow their knees to your Baal? But this answer I am content you shall take no notice of, and think it sufficient to tell you, that if it be true, that this supposed in-

visible church did hypocritically communicate with the visible church in her corruptions, then protestants had cause, nay necessity, to forsake their communion also; for otherwise they must have joined with them in the practice of impieties: and seeing they had such cause to separate, they presume their separation cannot be schismatical.

36. Yes, you reply, to forsake the external communion of them, with whom they agree in faith, is the most formal and proper sin of schism. *Ans.* Very true, but I would fain know wherein. I would gladly be informed, whether I be bound, for fear of schism, to communicate with those that believe as I do, only in lawful things, or absolutely in every thing; whether I am to join with them in superstition and idolatry, and not only in a common profession of the faith wherein we agree, but in a common dissimulation or abjuration of it. This is that which you would have them to do, or else, forsooth, they must be schismatics. But hereafter, I pray you remember, that there is no necessity of communicating even with true believers in wicked actions: nay, that there is a necessity herein to separate from them. And then I dare say, even you being their judge, the reasonableness of their cause to separate shall, according to my first observation, justify their separation from being schismatical.

37. *Arg.* But the property of schism, according to Dr. Potter, is to cut off from the hope of salvation, the church from which it separates: and these protestants have this property; therefore they are schismatics.

38. *Ans.* I deny the syllogism; it is no better than this:

One symptom of the plague is a fever;
But such a man hath a fever:
Therefore he hath the plague.

The true conclusion which issues out of these premises, should be this—therefore he hath one symptom of the plague. And so likewise in the former—therefore they have one property or one quality of schismatics. And as, in the former instance, the man that hath one sign of the plague may, by reason of the absence of other requisites, not have the plague: so these protestants may have something of schismatics, and yet not be schismatics. A tyrant sentencing a man to death for his pleasure, and a just judge that condemns a malefactor, do both sentence a man to death, and so for the matter do both the same thing; yet the one does wickedly, the other justly. What is the reason? Because the one hath cause, the other hath not. In like manner, schismatics either always or generally denounce damnation to them from whom they separate. The same do these protestants, and yet are not schismatics. The reason—because schismatics do it, and do it without a cause, and protestants have cause for what they do. The impieties of your church being, generally speaking, damnable; unless where they are excused by ignorance, and expiated, at least, by a general repentance. In fine, though perhaps it may be true, that all schismatics do so; yet universal affirmatives are not converted, and therefore it follows not by any good logic that all that do so, when there is just cause for it, must be schismatics. The cause in this matter of separation is all in all, and that, for aught I see, you never think of. But if these rigid pro-

testants have just cause to cut off your church from the hope of salvation; how can the milder sort allow hope of salvation to the members of this church? *Ans.*—Distinguish the quality of the persons censured, and this seeming repugnance of their censures will vanish into nothing. For your church may be considered either in regard of those in whom either negligence, or pride, or worldly fear, or hopes, or some other voluntary sin, is the cause of their ignorance; which I fear is the case of the generality of men amongst you: or in regard of those who owe their errors from truth to want of capacity, or default of instruction; either in respect of those that might know the truth, and will not; or of those who would know the truth, but (all things considered) cannot: in respect of those that have eyes to see, and will not; or those that would gladly see, but want eyes, or light. Consider the former sort of men, (which your more rigid censures seem especially to reflect upon) and the heaviest sentence will not be too heavy. Consider the latter, and the mildest will not be too mild. So that here is no difference but in words only; neither are you flattered by the one, nor uncharitably censured by the other.

39. Your next blow is directed against the milder sort of protestants, who (you say) involve themselves in the sin of schism, by communicating with those (as you call them) exterminating spirits, whom you conceive yourself to have proved schismatics; and now load them farther with the crime of heresy. For, say you, if you held yourselves obliged, under pain of damnation, to forsake the communion of the Roman church, by reason of her errors, which yet you confess were not funda-

mental; shall it not be much more damnable to live in confraternity with these, who defend an error of the failing of the church, which in the Donatists you confess to have been properly heretical?

40. *Ans.* You mistake, in thinking that protestants hold themselves obliged not to communicate with you, only or principally by reason of your errors and corruption. For the true reason, according to my third observation, is not so much because you maintain errors and corruptions, as because you impose them, and will allow your communion to none but to those that will hold them with you; and have so ordered your communion, that either we must communicate with you in these things, or nothing. And for this very reason, though it were granted that these protestants held this doctrine which you impute to them; and though this error were as damnable, and as much against the Creed as you pretend: yet, after all this, this parity between you and them might make it more lawful for us to communicate with them than you, because what they hold they hold to themselves, and refuse not (as you do) to communicate with them that hold the contrary.

41. Thus we may answer your argument, though both your former suppositions were granted. But then, for a second answer, I am to tell you, that there is no necessity of granting either of them. For neither do these protestants hold the failing of the church from its being, but only from its visibility: which, if you conceive all one, then must you conceive that the stars fail every day, and the sun every night. Neither is it certain that the doctrine of the church's failing is repugnant to the Creed: for, as the truth of the

article of the remission of sins, depends not upon the actual remission of any man's sins, but upon God's readiness and resolution to forgive the sins of all that believe and repent; so that, although unbelief or unpenitence should be universal, and the faithful should absolutely fail from the children of men, and the Son of man should find no faith in the earth; yet should the article still continue true, that God would forgive the sins of all that repent. In like manner, it is not certain that the truth of the article of the catholic church depends upon the actual existence of the catholic church; but rather upon the right that the church of Christ, or rather (to speak properly) the gospel of Christ, hath to be universally believed. And therefore the article may be true, though there were no church in the world. In regard, this notwithstanding, it remains still true, that there ought to be a church, and this church ought to be catholic. For as, of these two propositions, There is a church in America; and there should be a church in America: the truth of the latter depends not upon the truth of the former; so neither does it in these two: There is a church diffused all the world over; and there should be a church diffused all the world over.

42. Thirdly, If you understand by errors not fundamental, such as are not damnable, it is not true, as I have often told you, that we confess your errors not fundamental.

43. Lastly, For your desire that I should here apply an authority of St. Cyprian, alleged in your next number, I would have done so very willingly, but indeed I know not how to do it; for, in my apprehension, it hath no more to do with your

present business of proving it unlawful to communicate with these men, who hold the church was not always visible, than *in nova fert animus*. Besides, I am here again to remember you, that St. Cyprian's words, were they never so pertinent, yet are by neither of the parties litigant esteemed any rule of faith. And, therefore, the urging of them, and such-like authorities, serves only to make books great, and controversies endless.

44. Ad §. 17. The next section, in three long leaves, delivers us this short sense: That those protestants which say they have not left the church's external communion, but only her corruptions, pretend to do that which is impossible; because these corruptions were inherent in the church's external communion; and, therefore, he that forsakes them, cannot but forsake this.

45. *Ans.* But, who are they that pretend they forsook the church's corruptions, and not her external communion? Some there be that say, they have not left the church, that is, not ceased to be members of the church, but only left her corruptions: some, that they have not left the communion, but the corruptions of it; meaning the internal communion of it, and conjunction with it, by faith and obedience: which disagree from the former only in the manner of speaking; for he that is in the church, is in this kind of communion with it; and he that is not in this internal communion, is not in the church. Some, perhaps, that they left not your external communion in all things; meaning, that they left it not voluntary, being not **fugitivi*, but *fugati*, as being willing to

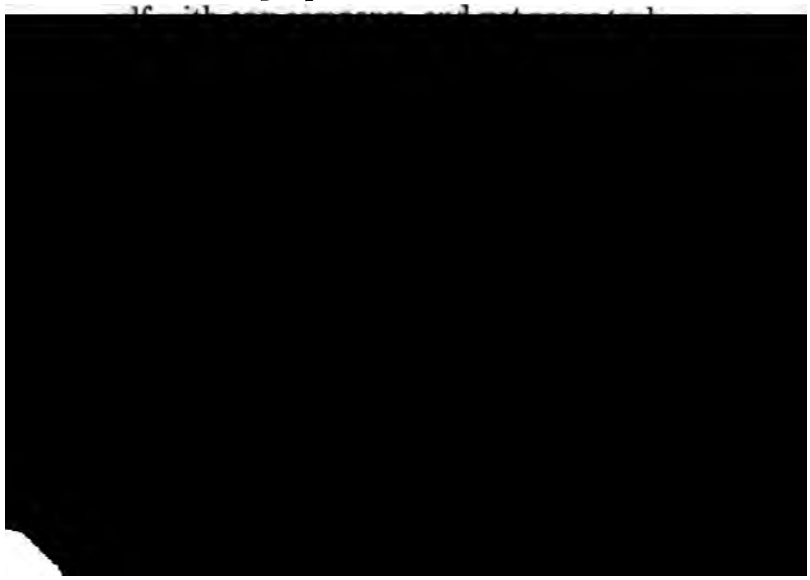
* Casaubon. in Ev. ad Card. Perron.

join with you in any act of piety; but were by you necessitated and constrained to do so, because you will not suffer them to do well with you, unless they would do ill with you. Now to do ill that you may do well, is against the will of God, which to every good man is a high degree of necessity. But for such protestants as pretend, that *de facto*, they forsook your corruptions only, and not your external communion, that is, such as pretend to communicate with you in your confessions and liturgies, and participation of sacraments; I cannot but doubt very much, that neither you, nor I, have ever met with any of this condition. And if perhaps you were led into error, by thinking that to leave the church, and to leave the external communion of it, was all one in sense and signification, I hope by this time you are disabused, and begin to understand, that as a man may leave any fashion or custom of a college, and yet remain still a member of the college; so a man may possibly leave some opinion or practice of a church, formerly common to himself and others, and continue still a member of that church: provided that what he forsakes be not one of those things wherein the essence of the church consists. Whereas peradventure this practice may be so involved with the external communion of this church, that it may be simply impossible for him to leave this practice, and not to leave the church's external communion.

46. You will reply, perhaps, That the difficulty lies as well against those who pretend to forsake the church's corruptions, and not the church, as against those who say, they forsook the church's

corruptions, and not her external communion. And that the reason is still the same; because they supposed corruptions were inherent in the whole church: and, therefore, by like reason with the former, could not be forsaken, but if the whole church were forsaken.

47. *Ans.* A pretty sophism, and very fit to persuade men that it is impossible for them to forsake any error they hold, or any vice they are subject to, either peculiar to themselves, or in common with others; because, forsooth, they cannot forsake themselves; and vices and errors are things inherent in themselves. The deceit lies, in not distinguishing between a local and a moral forsaking of any thing. For as it were an absurdity, fit for the maintainers of transubstantiation to defend, that a man may locally and properly depart from the accidents of a subject, and not from the subject itself; so is it also against reason to deny, that a man may (by an usual phrase of speech) forsake any custom or quality, good or bad, either proper to himself, or common to him-



weeds of superstitions and corruptions, but that some members of it might reform themselves, and yet remain still true members of the body of the church, and not be made no members, but the better by their reformation? Certainly it is so obvious and sensible a truth, that this thing is possible, that no man in his wits will be persuaded out of it, with all the quirks and metaphysics in the world. Neither is this to say, that a man may keep company with Christopher Potter, and not keep company with the Provost of Queen's College: nor that a man can avoid the company of a sinner, and at the same time be really present with the man who is the sinner: which we leave to those protestants of your invention, who are so foolish as to pretend, that a man may really separate himself from the church's external communion, as she is corrupted, and yet continue in that church's external communion, which in this external communion is corrupted. But we, that say only the whole church being corrupted, some parts of it might and did reform themselves, and yet might and did continue parts of the church, though separated from the external communion of the other parts, which would not reform, need not trouble ourselves to reconcile any such repugnance. For the case put by you, of keeping Dr. Potter's company, and leaving the company of the Provost of Queen's College; and of leaving a sinner's company, and not the man's; are nothing at all like ours. But, if you would speak to the point, you must shew, that Dr. Potter cannot leave being Provost of Queen's College, without ceasing to be himself; or, that a sinner cannot leave his sin, without ceasing to be a man; or, that he that is

part of any society, cannot renounce any vice of that society, but he must relinquish the society. If you would shew any of these things, then indeed (I dare promise) you shall find us apt enough to believe, that the particular parts of the visible church could not reform themselves, but they must of necessity become no parts of it. But until we see this done, you must pardon us if we choose to believe sense rather than sophistry.

48. In this paragraph you bring in the sentence of St. Cyprian, whereto you referred us in the former: but why, in a controversy of faith, do you cite any thing, which is confessed on all hands not to be a rule of faith? Besides, in my apprehension, this sentence of St. Cyprian's is, in this place, and to this purpose, merely impertinent. St. Cyprian's words are, "The church (he speaks of the particular church or diocese of Rome) being one, cannot be within and without: if she be with Novatianus, she was not with Cornelius: but if she were with Cornelius, who succeeded Fabianus by lawful ordination, Novatianus is not in the church." And now, having related the words, I am only to remember the reader, that your business was to prove it impossible for a man to forsake the church's corruptions, and not the church; and to request him to tell me, whether, as I said, *in nova fert animus* had not been as much to the purpose?

49. Toward the conclusion of this section, you number up your victories, and tell us—that out of your discourse it remaineth clear, that this our chiefest answer changeth the very state of the question; confoundeth internal acts of the understanding with external deeds; doth not distin-

guish between schism and heresy, and leaves this demonstrated against us, that they (protestants) divided themselves from the communion of the visible catholic church, because they conceived that she needed reformation. To which triumphs, if any reply be needful, then briefly thus: We do not change the state of the question, but you mistake it. For the question was not, whether they might forsake the corruption of the church, and continue in her external communion, which we confess impossible, because the corruptions were in her communion: but the question was, whether they might forsake the corruptions of the church, and not the church, but continue still the members of it. And to this question there is not in your whole discourse one pertinent syllable.

50. We do not confound internal acts of understanding with external deeds, but acknowledge (as you would have us) that we cannot, (as matters now stand) separate from your corruptions, but we must depart from your external communion. For you have so ordered things, that whosoever will communicate with you at all, must communicate with you in your corruptions. But it is you that will not perceive the difference between being a part of the church, and being in external communion of all the other parts of it; taking for granted, that which is certainly false, that no two men or churches, divided in external communion, can be both true parts of the catholic church.

51. We are not to learn the difference between schism and heresy, for heresy we conceive an obstinate defence of any error against any necessary article of the Christian faith; and schism, a cause-

less separation of one part of the church from another. But this we say, that if we convince you of errors and corruptions, professed and practised in your communion, then we cannot be schismatics, for refusing to join with you in the profession of these errors, and the practice of these corruptions. And therefore you must free either us from schism or yourselves from error; at least from requiring the profession of it as a condition of your communion.

52. Lastly, Whereas you say—That you have demonstrated against us, that protestants divided themselves from the external communion of the visible church; add—which external communion was corrupted—and we shall confess the accusation, and glory in it. But this is not that *quod erat demonstrandum*, but that we divided ourselves from the church, that is, made ourselves outlaws from it, and no members of it. And, moreover, in the reason of our separation from the external communion of your church you are mistaken; for it was not so much because she, your church, as because your church's external communion was corrupted, and needed reformation.

53. That a pretence of reformation will acquit no man from schism, we grant very willingly, and therefore say, that it concerns every man, who separates from any church's communion, even as much as his salvation is worth, to look most carefully to it, that the cause of his separation be just and necessary; for, unless it be necessary, it can very hardly be sufficient. But whether a true reformation of ourselves from errors, superstitions, and impieties, will not justify our separation in these things; our separation, I say, from them

who will not reform themselves, and, as much as in them lies, hinder others from doing so: this is the point you should have spoken to, but have not. As for the sentences of the fathers, to which you refer us, for the determination of this question, I suppose by what I have said above, the reader understands, by alleging them you have gained little credit to your cause or person. And that, if they were competent judges of this controversy, their sentence is against you much rather than for you.

54. Lastly, Whereas you desire Dr. Potter to remember his own words:—"There neither was, nor can be, any just cause to depart from the church of Christ, no more than from Christ himself," and pretend that you have shewed that Luther did so.—The Doctor remembers his words very well, and hath no reason to be ashamed of them. Only he desires you to remember, that hereafter you do not confound, as hitherto you have done, departing from the church (*i. e.* ceasing to be a member of it) with departing from the church's external communion; and then he is persuaded it will appear to you, that against Luther and his followers you have said many things, but shewed nothing.

55. But the church universal remaining the church universal, according to Dr. Potter, may fall into error: and from hence it clearly follows, that it is impossible to leave the external communion of the church so corrupted, and retain external communion with the catholic church.—*Ans.* The reason of this consequence, which you say is so clear, truly I cannot possibly discern; but the conclusion inferred, methinks, is evident of itself,

and therefore without proof I grant it. I mean, that it is impossible to leave the external communion of the catholic church corrupted, and to retain external communion with the catholic church. But what use you can make of it, I do not understand; unless you will pretend, that to say, a man may forsake the church's corruption, and not the church, is all one as to say he may forsake the church's external communion, and not forsake it. If you mean so, sure you mistake the meaning of protestants when they say—they forsook not the church, but her corruptions. For in saying so, they neither affirm, nor deny, that they forsook the external communion of the church, nor speak at all of it; but they mean only, that they ceased not to be still members of the church, though they ceased to believe and practise some things which the whole church formerly did believe and practise. And as for the external communion of the visible church, we have without scruple formerly granted, that protestants did forsake it: that is, renounce the practice of some observance, in which the whole visible church before them did communicate. But this we say they did without schism, because they had cause to do so, and no man can have cause to be a schismatic.

56. But your argument, you conceive, will be more convincing—if we consider, that when Luther appeared, there were not two distinct visible true churches; one pure, the other corrupted, but one church only.—*Ans.* The ground of this is no way certain, nor here sufficiently proved. For, whereas you say, histories are silent of any such matter; I answer, there is no necessity, that you or I should have read all histories, that may be

extant of these matters; nor that all should be extant that were written, much less extant uncorrupted; especially, considering your church, which had lately all the power in her hands, hath been so perniciously industrious, in corrupting the monuments of antiquity that made against her; nor that all records should remain, which were written; nor that all should be recorded which was done. Neither, Secondly, To suppose a visible church before Luther, which did not err, is it to contradict this ground of Dr. Potter's, that the church may err: unless you will have us believe, that may be and must be is all one, and that all which may be true, is true: which rule, if it were true, then sure all men would be honest, because all men may be so; and you would not make so bad arguments, unless you will pretend, you cannot make better. Nor, Thirdly, Is it to contradict these words, "the church may not hope to triumph over all error, till she be in heaven;" for to triumph over error, it is to be secure from it, to be out of danger of it, not to be obnoxious to it. Now a church may be free from error, and yet not secure from it, and consequently, in this sense, not triumph over it. Fourthly, Whereas you say, it evacuateth the brag of protestants, that Luther reformed the whole church; perhaps (though I know not who they be that say so) by a frequent synechdoche, they may mean by the whole the greatest and most illustrious part of it, the lustre whereof did much obscure the other, though it were not wholly invisible. Besides, if their brag be evacuated, (as you call it) let it be so, I see no harm will come of it. Lastly, Whereas you say, that, supposing a visible pure church, Luther must be a schismatic, who

separated from all visible churches.—I tell you, if you will suppose a visible church extant before, and when Luther arose, conformable to him in all points of doctrine, necessary and profitable, then Luther separated not from this church, but adjoined himself to it: not indeed in place, which was not necessary; nor in external communion, which was impossible; but by the union of faith and charity. Upon these grounds, I say, that the ground of this argument is no way made certain; yet because it is not manifestly false, I am content to let it pass. And, for aught I see, it is very safe for me to do so; for you build nothing upon it, which I may not fairly grant. For what do you conclude from hence, but that, seeing there was no visible church but corrupted, Luther forsaking the external communion of the corrupted church, could not but forsake the external communion of the catholic church? Well, let this also be granted, what will come of it? What, that Luther must be a schismatic? By no means: for not every separation, but only a causeless separation from the communion of the church, we maintain to be schismatical. Hereunto may be added, that though the whole church were corrupted, yet, properly speaking, it is not true, that Luther and his followers forsook the whole corrupted church, or the external communion of it: but only that he forsook that part of it which was corrupted, and still would be so; and forsook not, but only reformed another part, which part they themselves were, and I suppose you will not go about to persuade us, that they forsook themselves or their communion. And if you urge, that they joined themselves to no other part, therefore they sepa-

rated from the whole; I say, it follows not, inasmuch as themselves were a part of it, and still continued so; and therefore could no more separate from the whole than from themselves. Thus though there were no part of the people of Rome, to whom the plebeians joined themselves, when they made their secession into the Aventine hill; yet they divided themselves from the patricians only, and not from the whole people; because themselves were a part of this people, and they divided not from themselves.

57. Ad §. 18. In the 18th section, you prove that which no man denies, that—"corruption in manners yields no sufficient cause to leave the church:" yet sure, it yields sufficient cause to cast them out of the church, that are, after the church's public admonition, obstinate in notorious impieties. Neither doth the cutting off such men from the church, lay any necessity upon us, either to go out of the world, or out of the church, but rather puts these men out of the church into the world, where we may converse with them freely, without scandal to the church. Our blessed Saviour foretold, you say, that there should be in the church tares with choice corn. Look again, I pray, and you shall see, that the field, he speaks of, is not the church, but the world; and therefore neither do you obey our Saviour's command, "let both grow up till the harvest," who teach it to be lawful to root these tares (such are heretics) out of the world; neither do protestants disobey it, if they eject manifest heretics and notorious sinners out of the church.

58. Ad §. 19. In the 19th you are so courteous as to suppose corruptions in your doctrine; and yet undertake to prove that, neither could they

afford us any sufficient cause, or colourable necessity, to depart from them. Your reason is, because damnable errors there were none in your church by Dr. Potter's confession; neither can it be damnable in respect of error, to remain in any church's communion, whose errors are not damnable; for if the error be not damnable, the belief thereof cannot.—*Ans.* Dr. Potter confesseth no such matter; but only that—he hopes that your errors, though in themselves sufficiently damnable, yet by accident did not damn all that held them: such, he means and says, as were excusably ignorant of the truth, and amongst the number of their unknown sins, repented daily of their unknown errors. The truth is, he thinks as ill of your errors and their desert, as you do of ours; only he is not so peremptory and presumptuous in judging your persons, as you are in judging ours, but leaves them to stand or fall to their own Master, who is infinitely merciful, and therefore will not damn them for mere errors, who desire to find the truth, and cannot; and withal infinitely just, and therefore (it is to be feared) will not pardon them, who might easily have come to the knowledge of the truth, and either through pride, or obstinacy, or negligence, would not.

59. To your minor also, I answer almost in your own words, §. 42. of this chapter.—I thank you for your courteous supposal, that your church may err, and, in recompence thereof, will do you a charity, by putting you in mind, into what labyrinths you cast yourself, by supposing that the church may err in some of her proposals, and yet denying it lawful for any man, though he know this, which you suppose to oppose her judgment, or leave her communion.—Will you have such a

man dissemble against his conscience, or externally deny that which he knows true? No, that you will not; for them that do so, you yourself have pronounced "a damned crew of dissembling sycophants." Or, would you have him continue in your communion, and yet profess your church to err? This you yourselves have made to him impossible. Or, would you have him believe those things true, which together with him you have supposed to be errors? This, in such an one as is assured or persuaded of that, which you here suppose, that your church doth err, (and such only, we say, are obliged to forsake your communion) is, as schoolmen speak, *implicatio in terminis*, which is "a contradiction so plain, that one word destroyeth another: as if one should say, a living dead man." For it is to require that they which believe some part of your doctrine false, should withal believe it all true. Seeing, therefore, for any man to believe your church in error, and profess the contrary, is damnable hypocrisy; to believe it, and not believe it, a manifest repugnancy; and, thirdly, to profess it, and to continue in your communion (as matters now stand) a plain impossibility; what remains, but that whosoever is supposed to have just reason to disbelieve any doctrine of your church, must of necessity forsake her communion; unless you would remit so far from your present rigour, as to allow them your church's communion, who publicly profess that they do not believe every article of her established doctrine. Indeed, if you would do so, you might with some coherence suppose your church in error, and yet find fault with men for abandoning her communion, because they might continue in

it, and suppose her in error. But to suppose your church in error, and to excommunicate all those that believe your own supposition, and then to complain that they continue not in your communion, is the most ridiculous incongruity that can be imagined. And, therefore, though your corruptions in doctrine, in themselves (which yet is false) did not, yet your obliging us to profess your doctrine uncorrupted against knowledge and conscience, may induce an obligation to depart from your communion. As, if there were any society of Christians, that held there were no antipodes; notwithstanding this error, I might communicate with them: but if I could not do so without professing myself of their belief in this matter, then I suppose I should be excused from schism, if I should forsake their communion, rather than profess myself to believe that which I do not believe. Neither is there any contradiction, or shadow of contradiction, that it may be necessary for my salvation to depart from the church's communion; and that this church (though erring in this matter) wants nothing necessary to salvation. And yet this is that manifest contradiction, which Dr. Potter (you say) will never be able to solve, viz. "that there might be necessary cause to depart from the church of Rome in some doctrines and practices, though she wanted nothing necessary to salvation."

60. And your reason, wherewith you prove that there is in these words such a plain contradiction, is very notable. "For (say you) if she wanted nothing necessary to salvation, how could it be necessary to salvation to forsake her?" Truly, Sir, if this be a good manner of proving, it is a very

ready way to prove any thing; for what is there that may not be proved, if it be proof enough to ask, How can it be otherwise? Methinks, if you would convince Dr. Potter's words of manifest contradiction, you should shew, that he affirms and denies the same of the same. From which fault methinks he should be very innocent, who says only, that that may be damnable to one, which is not so to another; and that may be necessary for one, which is not necessary for another. And this is all that Dr. Potter says here, viz. That the profession of a falsehood to him that believes it, may be not damnable; and yet damnable to him that believes the contrary: or that not to profess a falsehood, in him that knows it to be so, is necessary to salvation; and yet not so in him that by error conceives it to be a truth. The words by you cited, and charged with unsalvable contradiction, are in the 75th page; but, in the progress of the same particular discourse, in the next page but one, he gives such evident reason of them, (which can hardly be done to prove implicancy true) that whereas you say, he will never be able to salve them from contradiction, I believe any indifferent reader, having considered the place, will be very apt to think, that you (whatsoever you pretend) were very able to have done this courtesy for him, if your will had been answerable to your ability. I will set down the words, and leave the reader to condemn or absolve them. "To forsake the errors of that church, and not to join with her in those practices which we account erroneous, we are enforced by necessity. For though in the issue they are not damnable to them which believe as they profess, yet for us to

profess and avow by oath (as the church of Rome enjoins) what we believe not, were, without question, damnable. And they, with their errors, by the grace of God, might go to heaven, when we for our hypocrisy and dissimulation, (he might have added, and perjury) should certainly be condemned to hell."

61. Ad §. 20. But a church not erring in fundamentals, though erring in other matters, doth what our Saviour exacts at her hands, doth as much as lies in her power to do: therefore, the communion of such a church is not upon pretence of error to be forsaken.—The consequence is manifest. The antecedent is proved; because God, by Dr. Potter's *confession, hath promised his assistance no further, nor is it in her power to do more than God doth assist her to do.—*Ans.* The promise of Divine assistance is twofold, absolute or conditional. That there shall be by Divine Providence preserved in the world, to the world's end, such a company of Christians, who hold all things precisely and indispensably necessary to salvation, and nothing inevitably destructive of it. This, and no more, the Doctor affirms that God hath promised absolutely. Yet he neither doubts nor denies, but that a farther assistance is conditionally promised us, even such an assistance as shall lead us, if we be not wanting to it and ourselves, into all, not only necessary, but very profitable truth, and guard us from all, not only destructive, but also hurtful errors. This, I say, he neither denies nor questions. And should he have done so, he might have been confuted by evident and ex-

* Page 151. 153.

press texts of Scripture. When therefore you say, that a church, not erring in fundamentals, doth as much as by God's assistance lies in her power to do, this is manifestly untrue; for God's assistance is always ready to promote her farther. It is ready, I say, but on condition the church does implore it; on condition, that when it is offered in the Divine directions of Scripture and reason, the church be not negligent to follow it. If therefore there be any church, which, retaining the foundation, builds hay and stubble upon it; which, believing what is precisely necessary, err shamefully and dangerously in other things very profitable: this by no means argues defect of Divine assistance in God, but neglect of this assistance in the church. Neither is there any reason, why such a church should please herself too much for retaining fundamental truths, while she remains so regardless of others. For though the simple defect of some truths profitable only, and not simply necessary, may consist with salvation; yet who is there that can give her sufficient assurances, that the neglect of such truths is not damnable? Besides, who is there that can put her in sufficient caution, that these errors about profitable matters may not, according to the usual fecundity of error, bring forth others of a higher quality, such as are pernicious and pestilent, and undermine by secret consequences the very foundations of religion and piety? Lastly, who can say that she hath sufficiently discharged her duty to God and man, by avoiding only fundamental heresies, if in the mean time she be negligent of others, which though they do not plainly destroy salvation, yet obscure and hinder, and

only not block up the way to it? Which though of themselves and immediately they damn no man, yet are causes and occasions that many men run the race of Christian piety more remissly than they should, many defer their repentance, many go on securely in their sins, and so at length are damned by means and occasion of these errors, though not for them. Such errors as these, (though those of the Roman church be much worse, even in themselves damnable, and by accident only pardonable) yet, I say, such errors as these, if any church should tolerate, dissemble, and suffer them to reign, and neglect to reform them, and not permit them to be freely, yet peaceably, opposed and impugned; will any wise man say, that she hath sufficiently discharged her duty to God and man? That she hath with due fidelity dispensed the gospel of Christ? That she hath done what she could, and what she ought? What shall we say, then, if these errors be taught by her, and commanded to be taught? What if she thunder out her curses against those that will not believe them? What if she rave and rage against them, and persecute them with fire and sword, and all kinds of most exquisite torments? Truly, I do much fear that from such a church (though it hold no error absolutely inconsistent with salvation) the candlestick of God either is already removed, or will be very shortly; and because she is negligent of profitable truths, that she will lose those that are necessary; and because she will not be led into all truths, that in short time she shall be led into none. And although this should not happen, yet what mortal man can secure us, that not only a probable unaf-

fected ignorance, not only a mere neglect of profitable truths, but also a wretchless, supine negligence, manifest contempt, dissimulation, opposition, oppression of them, may consist with salvation? I truly, for my part, though I hope very well of all such, as seeking all truth, find that which is necessary; who endeavouring to free themselves from all errors, any way contrary to the purity of Christianity, yet fail of performance, and remain in some: yet if I did not find in myself a love and desire of all profitable truth; if I did not put away idleness, and prejudice, and worldly affections, and so examine to the bottom all my opinions of Divine matters, being prepared in mind to follow God, and God only, which way soever he shall lead me; if I did not hope, that I either do, or endeavour to do, these things, certainly I should have little hope of obtaining salvation.

62. But to oblige any man, under pain of damnation, to forsake a church by reason of such errors, against which Christ thought it superfluous to promise his assistance; and for which he neither denies his grace here, nor his glory hereafter; what is it but to make the narrow way to heaven, narrower than Christ left it?—*Ans.* It is not; for Christ himself hath obliged us hereunto. He hath forbid us, under pain of damnation, to profess what we believe not, and consequently, under the same penalty, to leave that communion in which we cannot remain without this hypocritical profession of those things, which we are convinced to be erroneous. But then, besides, it is here falsely supposed (as hath been shewed already), that Christ hath not promised assistance to those that seek it, but only in matters simply necessary. Neither is

there any reason, why any church, even in this world, should despair of victory over all errors, pernicious or noxious, provided she humbly and earnestly implore Divine assistance, depend wholly upon it, and be not wanting to it. Though a triumph over all sin and error, that is, security that she neither doth nor can err, be rather to be desired than hoped for on earth, being a felicity reserved for heaven.

63. Ad §. 21. But at least the Roman church is as infallible as protestants, and protestants as fallible as the Roman church; therefore to forsake the Roman church for errors, what is it but to flit from one erring society to another?—*Ans.* The inconsequence of this argument is too apparent: protestants may err, as well as the church of Rome, therefore they did so! Boys in the schools know, that *a posse ad esse*, the argument follows not. He is equally fallible who believes twice two be four, as he that believes them to be twenty; yet in this he is not equally deceived, and he may be certain that he is not so. One architect is no more infallible than another, and yet he is more secure that his work is right and straight, who hath made it by the level, than he which hath made it by guess and by chance. So he that forsakes the errors of the church of Rome, and therefore renounceth her communion, that he may renounce the profession of her errors, though he knows himself fallible, as well as those whom he hath forsaken, yet he may be certain (as certain as the nature of the thing will bear) that he is not herein deceived; because he may see the doctrine forsaken by him repugnant to Scripture, and the doctrine embraced by him consonant to it. At least, this he may

know, that the doctrine which he hath chosen to him seems true, and the contrary which he hath forsaken seems false; and, therefore, without remorse of conscience, he may profess that, but this he cannot.

64. But we are to remember, that, according to Dr. Potter, the visible church hath a blessing not to err in fundamentals, in which any private reformer may fail; therefore, there was no necessity of forsaking the church, out of whose communion they were exposed to danger of falling into many more, and even into damnable errors.—*Ans.* The visible church is free indeed from all errors absolutely destructive and unpardonable; but not from all error which in itself is damnable; nor from all which will actually bring damnation upon them that keep themselves in them, by their own voluntary and unavoidable fault. From such errors, which are thus damnable, Dr. Potter doth no where say, that the visible church hath any privilege or exemption. Nay, you yourself teach, that he plainly teacheth the contrary, and thereupon will allow him to be no more charitable to the papists, than papists are to protestants: and yet upon this affected mistake your discourse is founded in almost forty places of your book. Besides, any private man, who truly believes the Scripture, and seriously endeavours to know the will of God, and to do it, is as secure as the visible church, more secure than your church, from the danger of erring in fundamentals; for it is impossible, that any man so qualified should fall into any error which to him will prove damnable: for God requires no more of any man to his salvation, but his true endeavour to be saved. Lastly, Abid-

ing in your church's communion is so far from securing me or any man from damnable error, that if I should abide in it, I am certain I could not be saved: for abide in it I cannot, without professing to believe your entire doctrine true: profess this I cannot, but I must lie perpetually, and exulcerate my conscience. And though your errors were not in themselves damnable, yet to resist the known truth, and to continue in the profession of known errors and falsehoods, is certainly a capital sin, and of great affinity with the sin which shall never be forgiven.

65. But neither is the church of protestants perfectly free from errors and corruptions: so the Doctor confesses, (n. 69.) which he can only excuse by saying, they are not fundamental; as likewise those in the Roman church are confessed not to be fundamental. And what man of judgment will be a protestant, since that church is confessedly a corrupted one?—*Ans.* And yet you yourself make large discourses in this very chapter, to persuade protestants to continue in the church of Rome, though supposed to have some corruptions. And why, I pray, may not a man of judgment continue in the communion of a church confessedly corrupted, as well as a church supposed to be corrupted, especially when this church, supposed to be corrupted, requires the belief and profession of her supposed corruptions, as the condition of her communion; which this church, confessedly corrupted, doth not. What man of judgment will think it any disparagement to his judgment, to prefer the better, though not simply the best, before that which is stark naught? to prefer indifferent good health, before a diseased and corrupt

ed state of body? to prefer a field, not perfectly weeded, before a field that is quite over-run with weeds and thorns? And, therefore, though protestants have some errors, yet seeing they are neither so great as yours, nor imposed with such tyranny, nor maintained with such obstinacy; he that conceives it any disparagement to his judgment, to change your communion for theirs, though confessed to have some corruptions, it may well be presumed that he hath but little judgment. For as for your pretence that yours are confessed not to be fundamental, it is an affected mistake, as already I have often told you.

66. Ad §. 22. But Dr. Potter says, "It is comfort enough for the church, that the Lord in mercy will secure her from all her capital dangers; but she may not hope to triumph over all sin and error till she be in heaven. Now, if it be comfort enough to be secured from all capital dangers, which can arise only from error in fundamental points, why were not your first reformers content with enough, but would needs dismember the church, out of a pernicious greediness of more than enough?"—*Ans.* I have already shewed you sufficiently, how capital danger may arise from errors, though not fundamental. I add now, that what may be enough to men in ignorance, may be to knowing men not enough; according to that of the gospel, "To whom much is given, of him much shall be required:" that the same error may be not capital to those who want means of finding the truth, and capital to others who have means, and neglect to use them: that to continue in the profession of error, discovered to be so, may be damnable, though the error be not so. These, I

presume, are reasons enough, and enough why the first reformers might think, and justly, that not enough for themselves, which yet to some of their predecessors they hope might be enough. This very argument was objected to *St. Cyprian upon another occasion, and also by the †British *quarto-decimans* to the maintainers of the doctrine of your church; and‡ by both this very answer was returned; and therefore I cannot but hope, that for their sakes you will approve it.

67. But if (as the Doctor says) no church may hope to triumph over all error till she be in

* St. Cyprian, Ep. 63. in these words: " Siquis de antecessoribus nostris, vel ignoranter vel simpliciter non hoc observavit, et tenuit quod nos Dominus facere exemplo et magisterio suo docuit, potest simplicitati ejus, de indulgentia Domini, venia concedi: nobis vero non potest ignosci, qui nunc a Domino admoniti et instructi sumus.

† Wilfridus, to Abbot Colman, alleging that he followed the example of his predecessors, famous for holiness, and famous for miracles, in these words: " De patre vestro Columba et sequacibus ejus, quorum sanctitatem vos imitari et regulam ac præcepta, cœlestibus signis confirmata, sequi perhibetis, possum respondere: quia multis in judicio dicentibus Domino quod in nomine ejus prophetaverint et dæmonia ejecerint, et virtutes multas fecerint, responsurus sit Dominus, quia nunquam eos noverit. Sed absit ut de patribus vestris hoc dicam, quia justius multo est de incognitis bonum credere quam malum. Unde et illos Dei famulos et Deo dilectos esse non nego, qui simplicitate rustica, sed intentione pia Deum dilexerunt: neque illis multum obesse Paschæ talem reor observantiam, quamdiu nullus advenerat qui eis instituti perfectioris decreta quæ sequerentur ostenderet. Quos utique credo, siquis tunc ad eos catholicus circulator adveniret, sic ejus monita fuisse secuturos, quomodo ea quæ noverant ac didicerunt Dei mandata, probantur fuisse secuti. Tu autem et socii tui, si audita decreta sedis apostolicæ, imo universalis ecclesiæ, et hæc literis sacris confirmata contemnitis, absque ulla dubietate peccatis.

‡ Beda, l. 5. Eccl. Hist. c. xxv.

heaven, then we must either grant, that errors not fundamental cannot yield sufficient cause to forsake the church, or you must affirm, that all communities may and ought to be forsaken.—*Ans.* The Doctor does not say, that no church may hope to be free from all error, either pernicious, or any way noxious; but that no church may hope to be secure from all error simply, for this were indeed truly to triumph over all. But then we say not, that the communion of any church is to be forsaken for errors unfundamental, unless it exact withal either a dissimulation of them being noxious, or a profession of them against the dictates of conscience, if they be mere errors. This, if the church does (as certainly yours doth), then her communion is to be forsaken, rather than the sin of hypocrisy to be committed. Whereas, to forsake the churches of protestants for such errors, there is no necessity, because they err to themselves, and do not under pain of excommunication exact the profession of their errors.

68. But the church may not be left by reason of sin, therefore neither by reason of errors not fundamental, inasmuch as both sin and error are impossible to be avoided till she be in heaven.—*Ans.* The reason of the consequence does not appear to me; but I answer to the antecedent: neither for sin nor errors ought a church to be forsaken, if she does not impose and enjoin them; but if she do (as the Roman does), then we must forsake men rather than God; leave the church's communion rather than commit sin, or profess known errors to be Divine truths. For the prophet Ezekiel hath assured us, that to say, "The Lord hath said so, when the Lord hath not said

so," is a great sin, and a high presumption, be a matter never so small.

69. Ad §. 23. But neither the quality nor the number of your church's errors could warrant our forsaking it. Not the *quality*, because we suppose them not fundamental: not the *number*, because the foundation is strong enough to support them.—*Ans.* Here again you vainly suppose, that we conceive your errors in themselves not damnable: though we hope they are not absolutely unpardonable: but to say they are pardonable, is indeed to suppose them damnable. Secondly, Though the errors of your church did not warrant our departure, yet your tyrannous imposition of them would be our sufficient justification. For this lays a necessity on us, either to forsake your company, or to profess what we know to be false.

70. Our blessed Saviour hath declared his will, that we forgive a private offender seventy-seven times; that is, without limitation of quantity of time, or quality of trespasses; and then, how dare we allege his command, that we must not pardon his church for errors acknowledged to be not fundamental?—*Ans.* He that commands us to pardon our brother, sinning against us so often, will not allow us for his sake to sin with him so much as once; he will have us to do any thing, but sin, rather than offend any man. But his will is also, that we offend all the world, rather than sin in the least matter. And, therefore, though his will were, and it were in our power (which is yet false) to pardon the errors of an erring church; yet certainly it is not his will, that we should err with the church, or, if we do not, that we should against conscience profess the errors of it.

71. Ad §. 24. But schismatics from the church of England, or any other church, with this very answer, that they forsake not the church, but the errors of it, may cast off from themselves the imputation of schism.—*Ans.* True, they may make the same answer, and the same defence as we do; as a murderer can cry Not guilty, as well as an innocent person; but not so truly, nor so justly. The question is not what may be pretended, but what can be proved by schismatics. They may object errors to other churches, as well as we do to yours; but that they prove their accusation so strongly as we can, that appears not. To the priests and elders of the Jews, imposing that sacred silence mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, St. Peter and St. John answered, they "must obey God rather than men." The three children to the King of Babylon, gave in effect the same answer. Give me now any factious hypocrite, who makes religion the pretence and cloak of his rebellion, and who sees not that such an one may answer for himself, in those very formal words which the holy apostles and martyrs made use of? And yet, I presume, no Christian will deny, but this answer was good in the mouth of the apostles and martyrs, though it were obnoxious to be abused by traitors and rebels. Certainly, therefore, it is no good consequence to say, schismatics may make use of this answer: therefore all that do make use of it are schismatics. But, moreover, it is to be observed, that the chief part of our defence, that you deny your communion to all that deny or doubt of any part of your doctrine, cannot with any colour be employed against protestants; who grant their communion to all who hold with them,

not all things, but things necessary; that is, such as are in Scripture plainly delivered.

72. But the forsaking the Roman church opens a way to innumerable sects and schisms, and therefore it must not be forsaken.—*Ans.* We must not do evil to avoid evil; neither are all courses presently lawful, by which inconveniences may be avoided. If all men would submit themselves to the chief Mufti of the Turks, it is apparent there would be no divisions; yet unity is not to be purchased at so dear a rate. It were a thing much to be desired, that there were no divisions; yet difference of opinions, touching points controverted, is rather to be chosen than unanimous concord in damned errors: as it is better for men to go to heaven by diverse ways, or rather by diverse paths of the same way, than in the same path to go on peaceably to hell—*Amica pax, magis amica veritas!*

73. But there can be no just cause to forsake the church, so the Doctor grants; who, notwithstanding, teacheth that the church may err in points not fundamental; therefore, neither is the Roman church to be forsaken for such errors.—*Ans.* There can be no just cause to forsake the church absolutely and simply in all things, that is, to cease being a member of the church; this I grant, if it will do you any service. But that there can be no just cause to forsake the church in some things, or (to speak more properly) to forsake some opinions and practices, which some true church detains and defends; this I deny, and you mistake the Doctor, if you think he affirms it.

74. Ad §. 26, 27. "What prodigious doctrines

(say you) are these? Those protestants who believe that your church erred in points necessary to salvation, and for that cause left her, cannot be excused from damnable schism. But others," &c. Prodigious doctrines indeed! but who, I pray, are they that teach them? Where does Dr. Potter accuse those protestants of damnable schism who left your church because they hold it erroneous in necessary points? What protestant is there that holds not that you taught things contrary to the plain precepts of Christ; both ceremonial, in mutilating the communion, and moral, in points of superstition and idolatry, and most bloody tyranny; which is without question to err in necessary matters? Neither does Dr. Potter accuse any man of schism for holding so, if he should call himself a schismatic: only he says, such (if there be any such) as affirm, that ignorant souls among you, who had no means to know the truth, cannot possibly be saved, that their wisdom and charity cannot be justified. Now you yourself have plainly affirmed, that ignorant protestants, dying with contrition, may be saved; and yet would be unwilling to be thought to say, that protestants err in no points necessary to salvation: for that may be in itself, and in ordinary course, where there are means of knowledge, necessary, which to a man invincibly ignorant, will prove not necessary. Again, where doth Dr. Potter suppose (as you make him) that there were other protestants who believed that your church had no errors? Or, where does he say, they did well to forsake her, upon this ridiculous reason, because they judged that she retained all means necessary to salvation? Do you think us so stupid, as that we cannot dis-

tinguish between that which Dr. Potter says, and that which you make him say? He vindicates protestants from schism two ways; the one is, because they had just, and great, and necessary cause to separate, which schismatics never have; because they that have it are no schismatics: for schism is always a causeless separation. The other is, because they did not join with their separation, an uncharitable damning of all those from whom they did divide themselves, as the manner of schismatics is. Now, that which he intends for a circumstance of our separation, you make him make the cause of it, and the motive to it. And whereas he says, "Though we separate from you in some things, yet we acknowledge your church a member of the body of Christ, and therefore are not schismatics;" you make him say, most absurdly, We did well to forsake you, because we judged you a member of the body of Christ. Just as if a brother should leave his brother's company in some ill courses, and should say to him—Herein I forsake you, yet I leave you not absolutely, for I acknowledge you still to be my brother, and shall use you as a brother; and you, perverting his speech, should pretend that he had said, I leave your company in these ill courses, and I do well to do so, because you are my brother: so making that the cause of leaving him, which indeed is the cause that he left him no farther.

75. But you say, "The very reason for which he acquitteth himself from schism, is, because he holds that the church which they forsook is not cut off from the body of Christ."—*Ans.* This is true; but can you not perceive a difference be-

tween justifying his separation from schism by this reason, and making this the reason of his separation? If a man denying obedience in some unlawful matter to his lawful sovereign, should say to him—Herein I disobey you, but yet I am no rebel, because I acknowledge you my sovereign lord, and am ready to obey you in all things lawful; should not he be an egregious sycophant, that should accuse him as if he had said—I do well to disobey you, because I acknowledge you my lawful sovereign? Certainly, he that joins this acknowledgment with his necessitated obedience, does well; but he that makes this consideration the reason of disobedience, doth ill. Urge, therefore, this (as you call it) most solemn foppery as far as you please; for every understanding reader will easily perceive that this is no foppery of Dr. Potter's, but a calumny of yours, from which he is as far, as he is from holding yours to be the true church; whereas, it is a sign of a great deal of charity in him, that he allows you to be a part of it.

76. And whereas you pretend to find such unspeakable comfort herein, that we cannot clear ourselves from schism, otherwise than by acknowledging that they do not, nor cannot, cut off your church from the hope of salvation; I beseech you to take care that this false comfort cost you not too dear: for why this good opinion of God Almighty, that he will not damn men for error, who were without their own fault ignorant of the truth, should be any consolation to them, who, having the key of knowledge, will neither use it themselves, nor permit others to use it; who have eyes to see, and will not see; who have ears to hear

and will not hear; this, I assure you, passeth my capacity to apprehend. Neither is this to make our salvation depend on yours, but only ours and yours not desperately inconsistent; nor to say, we must be damned, unless you may be saved; but that we assure ourselves, if our lives be answerable, we shall be saved by our knowledge. And that we hope (and I tell you again, *Spes est rei incertæ nomen)* that some of you may possibly be saved by occasion of their unaffected ignorance.

77. For our brethren, whom, you say, we condemn of heresy for denying the church's perpetuity, we know none that do so: unless you conceive a corrupted church to be none at all; and if you do, then, for aught I know, in your account we must be all heretics: for all of us acknowledge that the church might be corrupted even with errors in themselves damnable, and not only might, but hath been.

78. But schism consists in being divided from that true church, with which a man agreeth in all points of faith: now we must profess, you say, that we agree with the church of Rome in all fundamental articles; therefore we are schismatics.—*Ans.* Either in your major, by all points of faith, you mean all fundamental points only, or all simply and absolutely. If the former, I deny your major; for I may, without all schism, divide from that church which errs in any point of faith fundamental, or otherwise, if she require the profession of this error among the conditions of her communion. Now this is our case. If the latter, I deny the syllogism, as having manifestly four terms, and being cousin-german to this:

He that obeys God in all things is innocent;
Titius obeys God in some things,
Therefore he is innocent.

79. But they who judge a reconciliation with the church of Rome to be damnable; they that say, there might be just and necessary cause to depart from it, and that they of that church which have understanding and means to discover their errors, and neglect to use them, are not to be flattered with hope of salvation; they do cut off that church from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation, and so are schismatics; but Dr. Potter doth the former, therefore he is a schismatic.—*Ans.* No, he doth not; nor cut off that whole church from the hope of salvation, not those members of it who were invincibly or excusably ignorant of the truth; but those only, who, having understanding and means to discover their error, neglect to use them. Now these are not the whole church; and therefore he that, supposing their impenitence, cuts these off from hopes of salvation, cannot be justly said to cut off that whole church from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation.

80. Ad §. 28, 29. Whereas Dr. Potter says, "There is a great difference between a schism from them, and a reformation of ourselves:" this, you say, "is a quaint subtilty, by which all schism and sin may be as well excused." It seems, then, in your judgment, that thieves, and adulterers, and murderers, and traitors, may say, with as much probability as protestants, that they did no hurt to others, but only reform themselves. But then, methinks, it is very strange that all protestants should agree with one consent in this defence of

themselves from the imputation of schism; and that to this day, never any thief or murderer should have been heard of, to make use of this apology! And then for schismatics, I would know whether Victor, Bishop of Rome, who excommunicated the churches of Asia, for not conforming to his church in keeping Easter; whether Novatian, that divided from Cornelius, upon pretence that himself was elected Bishop of Rome, when indeed he was not; whether Felicissimus and his crew, that went out of the church of Carthage, and set up altar against altar, because, having fallen in persecution, they might not be restored to the peace of the church presently, upon the intercession of the confessors; whether the Donatists, who divided from, and damned all the world, because all the world would not excommunicate them who were accused only, and not convicted, to have been traditors of the sacred books; whether they which for the slips and infirmities of others, which they might and ought to tolerate, or upon some difference in matters of order and ceremony, or for some error in doctrine, neither pernicious nor hurtful to faith or piety, separate themselves from others, or others from themselves; or lastly, whether they that put themselves out of the church's unity and obedience, because their opinions are not approved there, but reprehended and confuted, or because being of impious conversation, they are impatient of their church's censure; I would know, I say, whether all, or any of these, may, with any face, or without extreme impudence, put in this plea of protestants, and pretend, with as much likelihood as they, that they did not separate from others, but

only reformed themselves? But suppose they were so impudent as to say so in their own defence falsely, doth it follow by any good logic, that therefore this apology is not to be employed by protestants, who may say so truly? We make, say they, no schism from you, but only a reformation of ourselves: this, you reply, is no good justification, because it may be pretended by any schismatic. Very true, any schismatic that can speak may say the same words, (as any rebel that makes conscience the cloak of his impious disobedience, may say with St. Peter and St. John, "We must obey God rather than men;") but then the question is, whether any schismatic may say so truly? And to this question you say just nothing; but conclude, because this defence may be abused by some, it must be used by none. As if you should have said, St. Peter and St. John did ill to make such an answer as they made, because impious hypocrites might make use of the same to palliate their disobedience and rebellion against the lawful commands of lawful authority.

81. But seeing their pretended reformation consisted in forsaking the church's corruptions, their reformation of themselves, and their division from you, falls out to be one and the same thing.—Just as if two men having been a long while companions in drunkenness, one of them should turn sober; this reformation of himself, and desertion of his companion, in this ill custom, would be one and the same thing, and yet there is no necessity that he should leave his love to him at all, or his society in other things. So protestants, forsaking their own former corruptions, which were common to them with you, could not choose, but withal

forsake you in the practice of these corruptions; yet this they might and would have done without breach of charity towards you; and without a renunciation of your company in any act of piety and devotion, confessedly lawful. And, therefore, though both these were by accident joined together, yet this hinders not but that the end they aimed at was not a separation from you, but a reformation of themselves.

82. Neither doth their disagreement, in the particulars of the reformation, (which yet when you measure it without partiality, you will find to be far short of infinite) nor their symbolizing in the general of forsaking your corruptions, prove any thing to the contrary, or any way advantage your design, or make for your purpose. For it is not any sign at all, much less an evident sign, that they had no settled design, but only to forsake the church of Rome; for nothing but malice can deny, that their intent at least was, to reduce religion to that original purity from which it was fallen. The declination from which, some conceiving to have begun (though secretly) in the apostles' times (the mystery of iniquity being then in work;) and after their departure, to have shewed itself more openly; others again believing, that the church continued pure for some ages after the apostles, and then declined: and consequently some aiming at an exact conformity with the apostolic times; others thinking they should do God and men good service, could they reduce the church to the condition of the fourth and fifth ages: some taking their direction in this work of reformation only from Scripture; others, from the writings of fathers, and the decrees of councils of the first

five ages; certainly it is no great marvel, that there was, as you say, disagreement between them, in the particulars of their reformation; nay, morally speaking, it was impossible it should be otherwise. Yet let me tell you, the difference between them (especially in comparison of your church and religion) is not the difference between good and bad, but between good and better; and they did best that followed Scripture interpreted by catholic written tradition; which rule the reformers of the church of England proposed to themselves to follow.

83. Ad §. 30—32. To this effect Dr. Potter, p. 81, 82. of his book speaks thus: "If a monastery should reform itself, and should reduce into practice ancient good discipline, when others would not; in this case could it be charged with schism from others, or with apostacy from its rule and order? So in a society of men universally infected with the same disease, they that should free themselves from it, could they be therefore said to separate from the society?" He presumes they could not, and from hence concludes, that "neither can the reformed churches be truly accused for making a schism, (that is, separating from the church and making themselves no members of it) if all they did was (as indeed it was) to reform themselves." Which cases, I believe, any understanding man will plainly see to have in them an exact parity of reason, and that therefore the argument drawn from them is pressing and unanswerable. And it may well be suspected, that you were partly of this mind, otherwise you would not have so presumed upon the simplicity of your reader, as, pretending to answer it, to put another

of your own making in place of it, and then to answer that.

84. This you do, §. 31, 32. of this chapter, in these words, "I was very glad to find you in a monastery," &c. Where I beseech the reader to observe these things, to detect the cunning of your tergiversation; First, That you have no reason to say, That you found Dr. Potter in a monastery; and as little, That you find him "inventing ways how to forsake his vocation, and to maintain the lawfulness of schism from the church, and apostacy from a religious order." Certainly the innocent case put by the Doctor, of a monastery reforming itself, hath not deserved such grievous accusations: unless reformation with you be all one with apostacy; and to forsake sin and disorder, be to forsake one's vocations: and surely, if it be so, your vocations are not very lawful, and your religious orders not very religious. Secondly, That you quite pervert and change Dr. Potter's cases, and instead of the case of a whole monastery reforming itself, when other monasteries of their order would not; and of some men freeing themselves from the common disease of their society, when others would not; you substitute two others, which you think you can better deal with, of some particular monks, upon pretence of the neglect of lesser monastical observances, going out of their monastery, which monastery yet did confessedly observe their substantial vows, and all principal statutes: and of a diseased person, quitting the company of those that were infected with the same disease, though in their company there was no danger from his disease, it being impossible that should be mortal, and out of it no

hope of escaping others like that for which he forsook the first infected company.—I appeal now to any indifferent judge, whether these cases be the same, or near the same, with Dr. Potter's? Whether this be fair and ingenuous dealing—instead of his two instances, which plainly shewed it possible in other societies, and consequently in that of the church, to leave the faults of a society, and not leave being of it, to foist in two others clean cross to the Doctor's purpose, of men, under colour of faults, abandoning the society wherein they lived? I know not what others may think of this dealing, but, to me, this declining Dr. Potter's cases, and conveying others into their place, is a great assurance, that, as they were put by him, you could say nothing to them.

85. But, that no suspicion of tergiversation may be fastened upon me, I am content to deal with you a little at your own weapons. Put the case then, though not just as you would have it, yet with as much favour to you as in reason you can expect—that a monastery did observe her substantial vows, and all principal statutes, but yet did generally practise, and also enjoin the violation of some lesser, yet obliging observances, and had done so time out of mind; and that some inferior monks, more conscientious than the rest, discovering this abuse, should first, with all earnestness, solicit their superiors for a general and orderly reformation of these, though small and venial corruptions, yet corruptions; but, finding they hoped and laboured in vain to effect this, should reform these faults in themselves, and refuse to join in the practice of them, with the rest of their confraternity, and persisting resolutely in

such a refusal, should, by their superiors, be cast out of their monastery, and being not to be re-admitted without a promise of remitting from their stiffness in these things, and of condescending to others in the practice of these small faults, should choose rather to continue exiles, than to re-enter upon such conditions; I would know whether you would condemn such men of apostacy from the order? Without doubt, if you should, you would find the stream of your casuists against you; and besides, involve St. Paul in the same condemnation, who plainly tells us, that "we may not do the least evil, that we may do the greatest good." Put case again, you should be part of a society universally infected with some disease, and discovering a certain remedy for this disease, should persuade the whole company to make use of it, but find the greatest part of them so far in love with their disease, they were resolved to keep it; nay, so fond of it, that they should make a decree, that whosoever would leave it, should leave their company. Suppose now that you yourself, and some few others, should, notwithstanding their injunction to the contrary, free yourselves from this disease, and thereupon they should absolutely forsake and reject you: I would know in this case who deserves to be condemned—whether you of uncharitable desertion of your company, or they of a tyrannical peevishness? And if in these cases you will (as I verily believe you will) acquit the inferiors, and condemn the superiors, absolve the minor part, and condemn the major, then can you with no reason condemn protestants, for choosing rather to be ejected from the communion of the Roman church, than with her to per-

sist (as of necessity they were to do, if they would continue in her communion) in the profession of errors, though not destructive of salvation, yet hindering edification; and in the practice, or at least approbation, of many (suppose not mortal but) venial corruptions.

86. Thirdly, The reader may be pleased to be advertised that you censure too partially the corrupt estate of your church in comparing it to a monastery, which did confessedly observe their substantial vows, and all principal statutes of their order, and moreover was secured by an infallible assistance, for the avoiding of all substantial corruptions: for of your church we confess no such matter, but say plainly, that she not only might fall into substantial corruptions, but did so; that she did not only generally violate, but of all the members of her communion, either in act or approbation, require and exact the violation of many substantial laws of Christ, both ceremonial and moral, which, though we hope it was pardonable in them, who had not means to know their error, yet, of its own nature, and to them who did or might have known their error, was certainly damnable. And that it was not the tything "of mint, and anise, and cummin," the neglect whereof we impute unto you, but the neglect of judgment, justice, and the weightier matters of the law.

87. Fourthly, I am to represent unto you that you use protestants very strangely, in comparing them to a company, who all were known to be led to their pretended reformation, not with an intent of reformation, but with some other sinister intention; which is impossible to be known of

you, and therefore to judge so, is against Christian charity, and common equity; and to such a company as acknowledge that themselves, as soon as they were gone out from the monastery that refused to reform, " must not hope to be free from those, or the like errors and corruptions, for which they left their brethren;" seeing this very hope and nothing else moved them to leave your communion; and this speech of yours, so far as it concerns the same errors, plainly destroys itself. For how can they possibly fall into the same errors, by forsaking your communion, which that they may forsake they do forsake your communion? And then for other errors of the like nature and quality, or more enormous than yours, though they deny it not possible, but by their negligence and wickedness they may fall into them, yet they are so far from acknowledging that they have no hope to avoid this mischief, that they proclaim to all the world, that it is most prone and easy to do so, to all those that fear God and love the truth; and hardly possible for them to do otherwise, without supine negligence and extreme impiety.

88. To fit the reddition of your perverted simile to the proposition of it, you tell us, that we teach, that for all fundamental points, the church is secured from error. I answer, fundamental errors may signify, either such as are repugnant to God's command, and so in their own nature damnable, though to those which out of invincible ignorance practise them, not unpardonable: or such as are not only meritoriously, but remedilessly pernicious and destructive of salvation. We hope that yours, and the Greek, and other churches before the Reformation, had not so far apostated from Christ,

as to be guilty of errors of the latter sort. We say, that not only the catholic church, but every particular true church, so long as it continues a church, is secured from fundamental errors of this kind, but secured not absolutely by any promise of Divine assistance, which being not ordinarily irresistible, but tempered to the nature of the receivers, may be neglected, and therefore withdrawn; but by the repugnance of any error in this sense fundamental to the essence and nature of a church. So that, to speak properly, not any set known company of men is secured, that, though they neglect the means of avoiding error, yet certainly they shall not err in fundamentals, which were necessary for the constitution of an infallible guide of faith: but rather they which know what is meant by a church, are secured, or rather certain, that a church remaining a church cannot fall into fundamental errors; because, when it does so, it is no longer a church. As they are certain men cannot become unreasonable creatures, because when they do so, they are no longer men. But for fundamental errors of the former sort, which yet, I hope, will warrant our departure from any communion infected with them, and requiring the profession of them; from such fundamental errors we do not teach so much as the church catholic, much less (which only were for your purpose) that your church had not any protection or security, but know for certain, that many errors of this nature had prevailed against you; and that a vain presumption of an absolute Divine assistance (which yet is promised but upon conditions) made both your present errors incurable, and exposed you to the imminent danger of more and

greater. This therefore is either to abuse what we say, or to impose falsely upon us what we say not. And to this you presently add another manifest falsehood, viz. that we say—that no particular person, or church, hath any promise of assistance in points fundamental. Whereas, cross to this in diameter, there is no protestant but holds, and must hold, that there is no particular church; no, nor person; but hath promise of Divine assistance to lead them into all necessary truth, if they seek it as they should, by the means which God hath appointed. And should we say otherwise, we should contradict plain Scripture, which assures us plainly, that—Every one that seeketh findeth, and every one that asketh receiveth: and that—If we being evil, can give good gifts to our children, much more shall our heavenly Father give his Spirit to them that ask it: and that—If any man want wisdom (especially spiritual wisdom) he is to ask of God, who giveth to all men, and upbraideth not.

89. You obtrude upon us, Thirdly—That when Luther began, he being but one, opposed himself to all, as well subjects as superiors.—*Ans.* If he did so in the cause of God, it was heroically done of him. This had been without hyperbolizing, *Mundus contra Athanasium*, and *Athanasius contra mundum;* neither is it impossible that the whole world should so far lie in wickedness, (as St. John speaks) that it may be lawful and noble for one man to oppose the world. But yet were we put to our oaths, we should surely not testify any such thing for you; for how can we say properly, and without straining, that—he opposed himself to *all*, unless we could say, also, that *all* opposed

themselves to him? And how can we say so, seeing the world can witness, that so many thousands, nay millions, followed his standard as soon as it was advanced?

90. But none that lived immediately before him thought or spake as he did.—This is, first, nothing to the purpose. The church was then corrupted, and sure it was no dishonour to him to begin the reformation. In the Christian warfare, every man ought to strive to be foremost. Secondly, It is more than you can justify: for though no man before him lifted up his voice like a trumpet, as Luther did; yet who can assure us, but that many before him both thought and spake in the lower voice of petitions and remonstrances, in many points, as he did.

91. Fourthly, and lastly, Whereas you say, that many chief learned protestants are forced to confess the antiquity of your doctrine and practice. I answer, of many doctrines and practices of yours, this is not true, nor pretended to be true by those that have dealt in this argument. Search your storehouse, Mr. Brerely, who hath travelled as far in this north-west discovery, as it was possible for human industry; and, when you have done so, I pray inform me, what confessions of protestants have you, for the antiquity of the doctrine of the communion in one kind: the lawfulness and expedience of the Latin service for the present use of indulgences: for the pope's power in temporalities over princes: for the picturing of the Trinity: for the lawfulness of the worship of pictures: for your beads, and rosary, and ladies' psalter; and, in a word, for your whole worship of the blessed Virgin: for your oblations by way of consumption, and

therefore in the quality of sacrifices to the Virgin Mary, and other saints: for your saying of paternosters and creeds to the honour of saints, and of ave-maries to the honour of other saints besides the blessed Virgin: for infallibility of the bishop or church of Rome: for your prohibiting the Scripture to be read publicly in the church, in such languages as all may understand: for your doctrine of the blessed Virgin's immunity from actual sin; and for your doctrine and worship of her immaculate conception: for the necessity of auricular confession: for the necessity of the priests' intention to obtain benefit by any of your sacraments: and, lastly, (not to trouble myself with finding out more) for this very doctrine of licentiousness, that though a man live and die without the practice of Christian virtues, and with the habits of many damnable sins unmortified; yet if he in the last moment of life have any sorrow for his sins, and join confession with it, certainly he shall be saved. Secondly, They that confess some of your doctrines to have been the doctrine of the fathers may be mistaken, being abused by many words and phrases of the fathers, which have the Roman sound, when they are far from the sense. Some of them I am sure are so, I will name Goularius, who in his Commentaries on St. Cyprian's 35th Ep. grants that the sentence ("heresies have sprung," &c.) quoted by you, §. 36. of this chapter, was meant of Cornelius: whereas it will be very plain to any attentive reader, that St. Cyprian speaks there of himself. Thirdly, Though some protestants confess some of your doctrine to be ancient, yet this is nothing, so long as it is evident, even by the confession of all sides, that many errors, I instance in that of the

millenaries, and the communicating of infants, were more ancient. Not any antiquity, therefore, unless it be absolute and primitive, is a certain sign of true doctrine. For if the church were obnoxious to corruption (as we pretend it was) who can possibly warrant us, that part of this corruption might not get in and prevail in the fifth, or fourth, or third, or second age? Especially seeing the apostles assure us, that the mystery of iniquity was working, though more secretly, even in their times. If any man ask, How could it become universal in so short a time? let him tell me how the error of the millenaries, and the communicating of infants, became so soon universal; and then he shall acknowledge, what was done in some, was possible in others. Lastly, To cry quittance with you, as there are protestants who confess the antiquity, but always post-nate to apostolic, of some points of your doctrine: so there want not papists who acknowledge as freely the novelty of many of them, and the antiquity of ours. A collection of whose testimonies we have (without thanks to you) in your *Indices expurgatorii;* the Divine Providence blessedly abusing for the readier manifestation of the truth this engine intended by you for the subversion and suppression of it. Here is no place to stand upon particulars: only one general ingenuous confession of that great * Erasmus may not be passed over in silence. *Non desunt magni theologi qui non verentur affirmare, nihil esse in Luthero quin per probatos authores defendi possit:* there want not great divines, which stick not to affirm that there is no-

* Erasm. Ep. lib. xv. Ep. ad Godeschalcum Ros.

thing in Luther, which may not be defended by good and allowed authors. Whereas therefore you close up this simile with—"consider these points, and see whether your similitude do not condemn your progenitors of schism from God's visible church:" I assure you, I have well considered them, and do plainly see that this is not Dr. Potter's similitude, but your own; and, besides, that it is wholly made up of mistakes and falsehood, and is at no hand a sufficient proof of this great accusation.

92. Let us come now to the second similitude of your making; in the entrance whereunto you tell us—that from the monastery Dr. Potter is fled to a hospital of persons universally infected with some disease, where he finds to be true what you supposed, that after his departure from his brethren, he might fall into greater inconveniences, and more infectious diseases than those for which he left them.—Thus you. But, to deal truly with you, I find nothing of all this, nor how it is consequent from any thing said by you, or done by Dr. Potter. But this I find, that you have composed this your similitude as you did the former, of a heap of vain suspicions, pretended to be grounded on our confessions. As, First, That your diseases, which we forsook, neither were nor could be mortal: whereas we assure ourselves, and are ready to justify, that they are and were mortal in themselves, and would have been so to us, if when light came to us, we had loved darkness more than light. And Dr. Potter, though he hoped your church wanted no necessary vital part, that is, that some in your church by ignorance might be saved; yet he nothing doubts but

that it is full of ulcers without, and diseases within, and is far from so extenuating your errors as to make them only like the superfluous fingers of the giant of Gath. Secondly, That we had no hope to avoid other diseases like those for which we forsook your company, nor to be secure out of it from damnable errors:—whereas the hope hereof was the only motive of our departure; and we assure ourselves that the means to be secured from damnable error, is not to be secure as you are, but carefully to use those means of avoiding it, to which God hath promised, and will never fail to give, a blessing. Thirdly, That those innumerable mischiefs which follow upon the departure of protestants, were caused by it as by a proper cause:—whereas their doctrine was no otherwise the occasion of them, than the gospel of Christ of the division of the world. The only fountain of all these mischiefs being indeed no other than your pouring out a flood of persecutions against protestants, only because they would not sin and be damned with you for company. Unless we may add, the impatience of some protestants, who not enduring to be torn in pieces like sheep by a company of wolves without resistance, chose rather to die like soldiers than martyrs.

93. But you proceed, and, falling into a fit of admiration, cry out and say thus, "To what pass hath heresy brought men, who blush not to compare the beloved spouse of the Lord, the only dove," &c. to a monastery that must be forsaken, to the giant in Gath with superfluous fingers!—But this spouse of Christ, this only dove, this purchase of our Saviour's blood, this catholic church, which you thus almost deify, what is it but a society of men,

whereof every particular, and by consequence the whole company, is, or may be, guilty of many sins daily committed against knowledge and conscience? Now I would fain understand why one error in faith, especially if not fundamental, should not consist with the holiness of this spouse, this dove, this church, as well as many and great sins committed against knowledge and conscience? If this be not to strain at gnats and swallow camels, I would fain understand what it is? And here, by the way, I desire you to consider whether, as it were with one stroke of a spunge, you do not wipe out all that you have said, to prove protestants schismatics for separating from your church, though supposed to be in some errors not fundamental. For if any such error may make her deserve to be compared to "a monastery so disordered that it must be forsaken;" then if you suppose (as here you do) your church in such errors, your church is so disordered that it must, and therefore without question may be, forsaken; I mean in those her disorders and corruptions, and no farther.

94. And yet you have not done with those similitudes—but must observe (you say) one thing, and that is, that as these reformers of the monastery, and others who left the diseased company, could not deny but that they left the said communities: so Luther and the rest cannot pretend not to have left the visible church. And that Dr. Potter speaks very strangely when he says, "In a society of men universally infected with some disease, they that should free themselves from the common disease, could not be therefore said to separate from the society." For if they do not separate them-

selves from the society of the infected persons, how do they free themselves from the common disease? To which I answer: that indeed if you speak of the reformers of a monastery, and of the deserters of the diseased company, as you put the cases, that is, of those which left these communities, then it is as true as gospel, that they cannot deny but that they left the said communities. But it appears not to me, how it will ensue hereupon, that Luther and the rest cannot pretend not to have left the visible church. For, to my apprehension, this argument is very weak:

> They which left some communities cannot truly deny but that they left them; therefore Luther and his followers cannot deny but that they left the visible church.

Where, methinks, you prove little, but take for granted that which is one of the greatest questions amongst us, that is, that the company which Luther left was the whole visible church: whereas you know we say, it was but a part of it, and that corrupted, and obstinate in her corruptions. Indeed, that Luther and his followers left off the practice of those corruptions wherein the whole visible church did communicate formerly, (which I meant when I acknowledged above that they forsook the external communion of the visible church) or that they left that part of the visible church in her corruptions which would not be reformed: these things, if you desire, I shall be willing to grant; and that by a synecdoche of the whole for the part, he might be said to forsake the visible church, that is, a part of it, and the greater part. But that, properly speaking, he forsook the whole visible church, I hope you will excuse me if I grant

not this, until you bring better proof of it than your former similitude. And my reason is this, because he and his followers were a part of this church, and ceased not to be so by their reformation. Now he and his followers certainly forsook not themselves; therefore not every part of the church, therefore not the whole church. But then, if you speak of Dr. Potter's cases, according as he put them, and answer not your own arguments, when you make shew of answering his; methinks it should not be so unreasonable as you make it, for the persons he speaks of to deny that they left the communities whereof they were members. For example, that the monks of St. Bennet's order make one body, whereof their several monasteries are several members, I presume it will be easily granted. Suppose now, that all these monasteries, being quite out of order, some twenty or thirty of them should reform themselves, the rest persisting still in their irregular courses; were it such a monstrous impudence as you make it, for these monasteries, which we suppose reformed, to deny that they forsook their order, or the community whereof they were parts? In my opinion it is no such matter. Let the world judge. Again, whereas the Doctor says, that "in a society of men universally infected with some disease, they that should free themselves from the common disease, could not therefore be said to separate from the society:" it is very strange to me that you should say, he speaks very strangely. Truly, Sir, I am extremely deceived if his words be not plain English, and plain sense, and contain such a manifest truth as cannot be denied with modesty, nor gone about to be proved

without vanity. For whatsoever is proved must be proved by something more evident. Now what can be more evident than this: that if some whole family were taken with agues, if the father of this family should free himself from his, that he should not therefore deservedly be thought to abandon and desert his family? But (say you) if they do not separate themselves from the society of the wicked persons, how do they free themselves from the common disease?—Do they at the same time remain in the company, and yet depart from those infected creatures? Methinks a writer of controversies should not be ignorant how this may be done without any such difficulty! But if you do not know I will tell you, there is no necessity they should leave the company of these infected persons at all, much less that they should at once depart from it and remain with it, which I confess were very difficult. But if they will free themselves from their disease, let them stay where they are, and take physic. Or, if you would be better informed how this strange thing may be done, learn from yourself—they may free their own persons from the common disease, yet so that they remain still in the company infected, eating and drinking with them, &c. Which are your own words within four or five lines after this: plainly shewing, that your mistaking Dr. Potter's meaning, and your wondering at his words as at some strange monsters, was all this while affected, and that you are conscious to yourself of perverting his argument, that you may seem to say something, when indeed you say nothing. Whereas therefore you add, we must then say that they separate themselves from the persons, though it be

by occasion of the disease; I assure you, good Sir, you must not do so at any hand; for then you alter and spoil Dr. Potter's case quite, and fight not with his reason, but your own shadow. For the instance of a man freeing himself from the disease of his company, and not leaving his company, is very fit to prove, by the parity of reason, that it is very possible a man may leave the corruptions of a church, and not leave the church, that is, not cease to be a member of it: but yours, of a man leaving his company, by occasion of their disease, hath no analogy at all with this business.

95. But Luther and his followers did not continue in the company of those from whose diseases they pretended to free themselves.—Very true, neither was it said they did so. There is no necessity that that which is compared to another thing should agree with it in all things; it is sufficient if it agree in that wherein it is compared. A man freeing himself from the common disease of a society, and yet continuing a part of it, is here compared to Luther and his followers, freeing themselves from the corruptions of the visible church, and continuing a part of the church. As for accompanying the other parts of it in all things, it was neither necessary, nor without destroying our supposition of their forsaking the corruptions of the church possible: not necessary, for they may be parts of the church which do not join with other parts of it in all observances: nor possible, for had he accompanied them in all things, he had not freed himself from the common corruptions.

96. But they endeavoured to force the society, whereof they were parts, to be healed and reformed as they were; and, if it refused, they did,

when they had power, drive them away, even their superiors, both spiritual and temporal, as is notorious.—The proofs hereof are wanting, and therefore I might defer my answer until they were produced; yet take this beforehand: if they did so then herein, in my opinion they did amiss; for I have learned from the ancient fathers of the church, that nothing is more against religion than to force religion; and of St. Paul, the weapons of the Christian warfare are not carnal. And great reason: for human violence may make men counterfeit, but cannot make them believe, and is therefore fit for nothing, but to breed form without, and atheism within. Besides, if this means of bringing men to embrace any religion were generally used, (as if it may be justly used in any place by those that have power, and think they have truth, certainly they cannot with reason deny but that it may be used in every place, by those that have power as well as they, and think they have truth as well as they) what could follow but the maintenance perhaps of truth, but perhaps only of the profession of it in one place, and the oppression of it in a hundred? What will follow from it, but the preservation peradventure of unity, but peradventure only of uniformity, in particular states and churches; but the immortalizing the greater and more lamentable divisions of Christendom and the world? And, therefore, what can follow from it, but perhaps in the judgment of carnal policy, the temporal benefit and tranquillity of temporal states and kingdoms, but the infinite prejudice, if not the desolation, of the kingdom of Christ? And therefore it well becomes them, who have their portions in this life, who

serve no higher state than that of England, or Spain, or France, nor this neither, any further than they may serve themselves by it; who think of no other happiness but the preservation of their own fortunes and tranquillity in this world; who think of no other means to preserve states, but human power and Machiavillian policy, and believe no other Creed but this, *Regi aut civitati imperium habenti nihil injustum quod utile:* such men as these it may become to maintain by worldly power and violence their state instrument, religion. For if all be vain and false (as in their judgment it is), the present whatsoever is better than any, because it is already settled: and alteration of it may draw with it change of states, and the change of state the subversion of their fortune. But they that are indeed servants and lovers of Christ, of truth, of the church, and of mankind, ought with all courage to oppose themselves against it, as a common enemy of all these. They that know there is a King of kings, and Lord of lords, by whose will and pleasure kings and kingdoms stand and fall; they know that to no king or state any thing can be profitable which is unjust; and that nothing can be more evidently unjust, than to force weak men, by the profession of a religion which they believe not, to lose their own eternal happiness, out of a vain and needless fear, lest they may possibly disturb their temporal quietness. There is no danger to any state from any man's opinion; unless it be such an opinion, by which disobedience to authority, or impiety, is taught or licensed; which sort, I confess, may justly be punished as well as other faults; or, unless this sanguinary doctrine be joined with it,

that it is lawful for him by human violence to enforce others to it. Therefore, if protestants did offer violence to other men's consciences, and compel them to embrace their Reformation, I excuse them not; much less if they did so to the sacred persons of kings, and those that were in authority over them, who ought to be so secured from violence, that even their unjust and tyrannous violence, though it may be avoided, (according to that of our Saviour, "when they persecute you in one city, flee unto another") yet may it not be resisted by opposing violence against it. Protestants, therefore, that were guilty of this crime, are not to be excused; and blessed had they been, had they chosen rather to be martyrs than murderers, and to die for their religion rather than to fight for it. But of all the men in the world, you are the most unfit to accuse them hereof, against whom the souls of the martyrs from under the altar cry much louder than against all their other persecutors together: have daily sacrificed hecatombs of innocent Christians, under the name of heretics, to your blind zeal, and furious superstition: who teach plainly, that you may propagate your religion, whensoever you have power, by deposing of kings, and invasion of kingdoms; and think, when you kill the adversaries of it, you do God good service. But for their departing corporally from them, who mentally they had forsaken; for their forsaking the external communion and company of the unreformed part of the church, in their superstitions and impieties: thus much of your accusation we embrace, and glory in it; and say, though some protestants might offend in the manner or degree of their separation, yet certainly

their separation itself was not schismatical, but innocent; and not only so, but just and necessary. And as for your obtruding upon Dr. Potter, that he should say, there neither was nor could be just cause to do so, no more than to depart from Christ himself, I have shewed divers times already, that you deal very injuriously with him, confounding together departing from the church, and departing from some general opinions and practices, which did not constitute, but vitiate, not make the church, but mar it. For though he says that which is most true, that there can be no just cause to depart from the church, that is, to cease being a member of the church, no more than to depart from Christ himself, inasmuch as these are not divers, but the same thing; yet he no where denies, but there might be just and necessary cause to depart from some opinions and practices of your church, nay of the catholic church. And therefore you do vainly infer, that Luther and his followers for so doing were schismatics.

97. Ad §. 35. I answer in a word, that neither are Optatus's sayings rules of faith, and therefore not fit to determine controversies of faith: and then, that Majorinus might well be a schismatic for departing from Cæcilianus, and the chair of Cyprian and Peter without cause; and yet Luther and his followers, who departed from the communion of the Bishop of Rome, and the bishop of their own diocese, be none, because they had just and necessary cause of their departure. For otherwise they must have continued in the profession of known errors, and the practice of manifest corruptions.

98. Ad §. 36. In the next section you tell us,

that Christ our Lord gave St. Peter and his successors authority over his whole militant church. And, for proof hereof, you first refer us to Brerely, citing exactly the places of such chief protestants as have confessed the antiquity of this point. Where first you fall into the fallacy which is called *ignoratio elenchi*, or mistaking the question; for being to prove this point true, you only prove it ancient: which, to what purpose is it, when both the parties litigant are agreed, that many errors were held by many of the ancient doctors, much more ancient than any of those who are pretended to be confessed by protestants to have held with you in this matter: and when those, whom you have to do with, and whom it is vain to dispute against, but out of principles received by them, are all peremptory, that though novelty be a certain note of falsehood, yet no antiquity, less than apostolical, is a certain note of truth? Yet this I say not as if I did acknowledge what you pretend, that protestants did confess the fathers against them in this point. For the point here issuable is not, whether St. Peter were head of the church? Nor, whether the Bishop of Rome had any priority in the church? Nor, whether he had authority over it given him by the church? But, whether by Divine right, and by Christ's appointment, he were head of the catholic church? Now, having perused Brerely, I cannot find any one protestant confessing any one father to have concurred in opinion with you in this point. And the reader hath reason to suspect, that you also out of all the fathers could not find any one authority pertinent to this purpose; for otherwise you were much to blame, citing so few, to make choice of such as are impertinent. For let the under-

standing reader peruse the 55th Epist. of St. Cyprian, with an ordinary attention, out of which you take your first place; and I am confident, that he shall find, that he means nothing else by the words quoted by you, but that in one particular church, at one time, there ought to be but one bishop, and that he should be obeyed in all things lawful; the non-performance whereof was one of the most ordinary causes of heresies against the faith, and schism from the communion of the church universal. He shall find, secondly, and that by many convincing arguments, that though he write to Cornelius, bishop of Rome, yet he speaks not of him, but of himself then bishop of Carthage, against whom a faction of schismatics had then set up another. And therefore here your ingenuity is to be commended above many of your side: for whereas they ordinarily abuse this place to prove, that in the whole church there ought to be but one priest, and one judge; you seem somewhat diffident hereof, and thereupon say, that the words plainly condemn Luther, whether he will understand them as spoken of the universal, or of every particular church: but whether they condemn Luther is another question. The question here is, whether they plainly prove the pope's supremacy over all other bishops? Which certainly they are as far from proving as from proving the supremacy of any other bishop; seeing it is evident they were intended not of one bishop over the whole catholic church, but of one bishop in one particular church.

99. And no less impertinent is your saying out of Optatus, if it be well looked into, though at the first sight it may seem otherwise; because Opta-

tus's scene happened to be Rome, whereas St. Cyprian's was Carthage. The truth is, the Donatists had set up at Rome a bishop of their faction; not with intent to make him bishop of the whole church, but of that church in particular. Now Optatus, going upon St. Cyprian's above-mentioned ground of one bishop in one church, proves them schismatics for so doing. And he proves it by this argument: St. Peter was first bishop of Rome, neither did the apostles arrogate to themselves each one his particular chair (understand, in that city; for in other places (then, I hope, had chairs beside St. Peter,) and therefore he is a schismatic, who against that one single chair erects another, (understand, as before, in that place) making another bishop of that diocese besides him who was lawfully elected to it.

100. But yet by the way he styles St. Peter head of the apostles, and says, that from thence he was called Cephas.—*Ans.* Perhaps he was abused into this opinion, by thinking Cephas derived from the Greek word κεφαλή, a head; whereas it is a Syriac word, and signifies a stone. Besides, St. Peter might be head of the apostles, that is, first in order and honour among them, and not have supreme authority over them. And indeed that St. Peter should have authority over all the apostles, and yet exercise no one act of authority over any one of them, and that they should shew to him no sign of subjection, methinks is as strange as that a king of England for twenty-five years together should do no act of regality, nor receive any one acknowledgment of it. As strange methinks it is, that you, so many ages after, should know this so certainly, as you pre-

tend to do, and that the apostles (after that those words were spoken in their hearing, by virtue whereof St. Peter is pretended to have been made their head) should still be so ignorant of it, as to question which of them should be the greatest? Yet more strange, that our Saviour should not bring them out of their error, by telling them St. Peter was the man, but rather confirm it by saying—The kings of the gentiles exercise authority over them, but it should not be so among them. No less a wonder was it, that St. Paul should so far forget St. Peter and himself, as that, first, mentioning of him so often, he should do it without any title of honour: secondly, speaking of the several degrees of men in the church, he should not give St. Peter the highest, but place him in equipage with the rest of the apostles, and say, "God hath appointed (not first Peter, then the rest of the apostles, but) first apostles, secondly prophets." Certainly, if the apostles were all first, to me it is very probable, that no one of them was before the rest. For by *first*, all men understand either that which is before all, or that before which is nothing. Now, in the former sense, the apostles could not be all first, for then every one of them must have been before every one of the rest; and therefore they must be first in the other sense. And therefore no man, and therefore not St. Peter, must be before any of them. Thirdly and lastly, That speaking of himself in particular, and perhaps comparing himself with St. Peter in particular, rather than any other, he should say, in plain terms, I am nothing inferior to the very chiefest apostles. But, besides all this, though we should grant against all these probabilities, and many more, that Op-

fatus meant, that St. Peter was head of the apostles, not in our, but in your sense, and that St. Peter indeed was so; yet still you are very far from shewing, that in the judgment of Optatus, the Bishop of Rome was to be at all, much less by Divine right, successor to St. Peter in this his headship and authority. For what incongruity is there if we say, that he might succeed St. Peter in that part of his care, the government of that particular church, (as sure he did even while St. Peter was living) and yet that neither he nor any man was to succeed him in his apostleship, nor in his government of the church universal? Especially, seeing St. Peter and the rest of the apostles, by laying the foundations of the church, were to be the foundations of it, and accordingly are so called in Scripture. And therefore as in a building it is incongruous, that foundations should succeed foundations; so it may be in the church, that any other apostles should succeed the first.

101. Ad §. 37. The next paragraph I might well pass over, as having no argument in it. For there is nothing in it but two sayings of St. Augustine, which I have great reason to esteem no argument, until you will promise me to grant whatsoever I shall prove by two sayings of St. Augustine. But, moreover, the second of these sentences seems to me to imply the contradiction of the first. For to say, that the sacrilege of schism is eminent, when there is no cause of separation, implies to my understanding, that there may be a cause of separation. Now in the first, he says plainly, that this is impossible. Neither doth any reconciliation of his words occur to me, but only this, that in the former he speaks upon

supposition, that the public service of God, where in men are to communicate, is unpolluted, and no unlawful thing practised in their communion; which was so true of their communion, that the Donatists, who separated, did not deny it. And to make this answer no improbable evasion, it is observable out of St. Augustine and Optatus, that though the Donatists, at the beginning of their separation, pretended no cause for it, but only that the men, from whom they separated, were defiled with the contagion of traditors; yet afterwards, to make the continuance of it more justifiable, they did invent and spread abroad this calumny against catholics, that they set pictures upon their altars; which, when St. Augustine comes to answer, he does not deny the possibility of the thing, for that had been to deny the catholic church to be made up of men, all which had free will to do evil, and therefore might possibly agree in doing it; and, had he denied this, the action of after ages had been his refutation: neither does he say, (as you would have done) that it was true, they placed pictures there, and moreover worshipped them; but yet not for their own sakes, but for theirs who were represented by them: neither does he say, (as you do in this chapter) that though this were granted a corruption, yet were they not to separate for it. What then does he? Certainly nothing else but abhor the thing, and deny the imputation. Which way of answering does not, I confess, plainly shew, but yet it somewhat intimates, that he had nothing else to answer; and that if he could not have denied this, he could not have denied the Donatists' separation from them to have been just. If this answer to this little ar-

gument seem not sufficient, I add, moreover, that if it be applied to Luther's separation, it hath the common fault of all your allegations out of fathers, impertinence. For it is one thing to separate from the communion of the whole world, another to separate from all the communions in the world: one thing to divide from them who are united among themselves, another to divide from them who are divided among themselves. Now the Donatists, separated from the whole world of Christians, united in one communion, professing the same faith, serving God after the same manner, which was a very great argument, that they could not have just cause to leave them; according to that of Tertullian—*Variasse debuerat error ecclesiarum; quod autem apud multos unum est, non est erratum, sed traditum.* But Luther and his followers did not so. The world, I mean of Christians and catholics, was divided and subdivided long before he divided from it; and by their divisions had much weakened their own authority, and taken away from you this plea of St. Augustine, which stands upon no other foundation, but the unity of the whole world's communion.

102. Ad §. 38. If Luther were in the right, most certain those protestants that differed from him were in the wrong:—but that either he or they were schismatics, it follows not. Or, if it does, then either the Jesuits are schismatics from the Dominicans, or they from the Jesuits; the canonists from the Jesuits, or the Jesuits from the canonists; the Scotists from the Thomists, or they from the Scotists; the Franciscans from the Dominicans, or the Dominicans from the Franciscans: for between all these the world knows, that, in

point of doctrine, there is a plain and irreconcilable contradiction; and therefore one part must be in error, at least not fundamental. Thus your argument returns upon yourself, and, if it be good, proves the Roman church in a manner to be made up of schismatics. But the answer to it is, that it begs this very false and vain supposition—that whosoever errs in any point of doctrine is a schismatic.

103. Ad §. 39. In the next place you number up your victories, and tell us—that out of those premises, this conclusion follows; that Luther and his followers were schismatics from the visible church; the pope; the diocese wherein they were baptized; from the bishop under whom they lived; from the country to which they belonged; from their religious order, wherein they were professed; from one another; and, lastly, from a man's self; because the self-same protestant is convicted to-day, that his yesterday's opinion was an error.—To which I answer, That Luther and his followers separated from many of these, in some opinions and practices; but that they did it without cause, which only can make them schismatics, that was the only thing you should have proved; and to that you have not urged one reason of any moment. All of them for weight and strength were cousin-germans to this pretty device, wherewith you will prove them schismatics from themselves, because the self-same protestant to-day is convicted in conscience, that his yesterday's opinion was an error. It seems, then, that they that hold errors, must hold them fast, and take special care of being convicted in conscience, that they are in error, for fear of being

schismatics! protestants must continue protestants, and puritans puritans, and papists papists; nay, Jews, and Turks, and pagans, must remain Jews, and Turks, and pagans, and go on constantly to the devil; or else, forsooth, they must be schismatics, and that from themselves. And this, perhaps, is the cause that makes papists so obstinate, not only in their common superstition, but also in adhering to the proper fancies of their several sects; so that it is a miracle to hear of any Jesuit that hath forsaken the opinion of the Jesuits, or any Dominican that hath changed his for the Jesuits. Without question, this gentleman, my adversary, knows none such, or else, methinks, he should not have objected it to Dr. Potter, that he knew a man in the world, who, from a puritan, was turned to a moderate protestant, which is likely to be true. But sure, if this be all his fault, he hath no reason to be ashamed of his acquaintance: for, possibly it may be a fault to be in error, because many times it proceeds from a fault; but sure the forsaking of error cannot be a sin, unless to be in error be a virtue. And, therefore, to do as you do, to damn men for false opinions, to call them schismatics for leaving them; to make pertinacy in error, that is, an unwillingness to be convicted, or a resolution not to be convicted, the form of heresy, and to find fault with men for being convicted in conscience, that they are in error, is the most incoherent and contradictious injustice that ever was heard of. But, Sir, if this be a strange matter to you, that which I shall tell you will be much stranger: I know a man that of a moderate protestant turned a papist; and, the day that he did so (as all things that are

done are perfected some day or other) was convicted in conscience, that his yesterday's opinion was an error, and yet thinks he was no schismatic for doing so, and desires to be informed by you, whether or no he was mistaken? The same man, afterwards, upon better consideration, became a doubting papist; and of a doubting papist a confirmed protestant. And yet this man thinks himself no more to blame for all these changes, than a traveller, who, using all diligence to find the right way to some remote city, where he had never been (as the party I speak of had never been in heaven), did yet mistake it, and after find his error, and amend it. Nay, he stands upon his justification so far, as to maintain, that his alterations, not only to you, but also from you, by God's mercy, were the most satisfactory actions to himself that ever he did, and the greatest victories that ever he obtained over himself, and his affections to those things which in this world are most precious; as wherein, for God's sake, and (as he was verily persuaded) out of love to the truth, he went, upon a certain expectation of those inconveniences, which to ingenuous natures are of all most terrible: so that, though there were much weakness in some of these alterations, yet certainly there was no wickedness. Neither does he yield his weakness altogether without apology, seeing his deductions were rational, and out of some principles commonly received by protestants as well as papists, and which by his education had got possession of his understanding.

104. Ad §. 40, 41. Dr. Potter, p. 81. of his book, to prove our separation from you not only lawful, but necessary, hath these words: "Al-

though we confess the church of Rome (in some sense) to be a true church, and her errors (to some men) not damnable; yet for us, who are convinced in conscience that she errs in many things, a necessity lies upon us, even under pain of damnation, to forsake her in those errors." He means not, in the belief of those errors, for that is presupposed to be done already; for whosoever is convinced in conscience, that she errs, hath for matter of belief forsaken, that is, ceased to believe, those errors. This, therefore, he meant not, nor could not mean; but, that whosoever is convinced in conscience, that the church of Rome errs, cannot, with a good conscience, but forsake her in the profession and practice of these errors: and the reason hereof is manifest, because otherwise he must profess what he believes not, and practise what he approves not. Which is no more than yourself in *these* have divers times affirmed: for in one place you say, "it is unlawful to speak any the least untruth." Now he that professeth your religion, and believes it not, what else doth he but live in a perpetual lie? Again, in another, you have called them that profess one thing, and believe another, "a damned crew of dissembling sycophants:" and, therefore, in inveighing against protestants for forsaking the profession of these errors, the belief whereof they had already forsaken, what do you but rail at them for not being "a damned crew of dissembling sycophants?" And, lastly, §. 42. of this chapter, within three leaves after this, whereas Dr. Potter grants but only a necessity of peaceable external obedience to the declaration of the church, though perhaps erroneous, (provided it be in matter not of faith,

but of opinions or rites) condemning those men, who, by occasion of errors of this quality, disturb the church's peace, and cast off her communion: upon this occasion you come upon him with this bitter sarcasm, " I thank you for your ingenuous confession, in recompence whereof I will do a deed of charity, by putting you in mind into what labyrinths you are brought, by teaching that the church may err in some points of faith, and yet that it is not lawful for any man to oppose his judgment, or leave her communion, though he have evidence of Scripture against her! Will you have such a man dissemble against his conscience, or externally deny truth known to be contained in Holy Scripture?" I answer for him, No, it is not he, but you, that would have men do so; not he, who says plainly, that " whosoever is convinced in conscience, that any church errs, is bound, under pain of damnation, to forsake her in her profession and practice of these errors;" but you, who find fault with him, and make long discourses against him for thus affirming: not he, who can easily wind himself out of your imaginary labyrinth, by telling you, that he no where denies it lawful for any man to oppose any church, erring in matter of faith; for that he speaks not of matters of faith at all, but only of rights and opinions. And in such matters, he says indeed at first, " It is not lawful for any man to oppose his judgment to the public:" but he presently explains himself by saying, not only that he may hold an opinion contrary to the public resolution, but besides that he may offer it to be considered of, (so far is he from requiring any sinful dissimulation) provided he do it with great probability of reason, very

modestly and respectfully, and without separation from the church's communion. It is not, therefore, in this case, opposing a man's private judgment to the public simply, which the Doctor finds fault with; but the degree only and malice of this opposition, opposing it factiously; and not holding a man's own conceit different from the church absolutely, which here he censures; but a factious advancing it, and despising the church, so far as to cast off her communion; because, forsooth, she errs in some opinion, or useth some inconvenient, though not impious, rites and ceremonies. Little reason, therefore, have you to accuse him there, as if he required that men should dissemble their conscience, or externally deny a truth "known to be contained in Holy Scripture." But certainly a great deal less to quarrel with him for saying, (which is all that here he says)—that men, under pain of damnation, are not to dissemble; but if they be convinced in conscience, that your, or any other church, (for the reason is alike for all) errs in many things, are of necessity to forsake that church, in the profession and practice of those errors.

105. But to consider your exception to this speech of the Doctor's somewhat more particularly, I say, your whole discourse against it is compounded of falsehoods and impertinences. The first falsehood is, that he in these words avoucheth, that no learned catholics can be saved. Unless you will suppose, that all learned catholics are convinced in conscience, that your church errs in many things. It may well be feared, that many are so convinced, and yet profess what they believe not. Many more have been, and have

stifled their consciences, by thinking it an act of humility to do so. Many more would have been, had they, with liberty and indifference of judgment, examined the grounds of the religion which they profess. But to think, that all the learned of your side are actually convinced of errors in your church, and yet will not forsake the profession of them, this is so great an uncharitableness, that I verily believe that Dr. Potter abhors it. Your next falsehood is, That the Doctor affirms, that you catholics want no means of salvation; and that he judges the Roman errors not to be in themselves fundamental or damnable. Which calumny I have very often confuted: and in this very place it is confuted by Dr. Potter, and confessed by yourself. For, in the beginning of this answer, you tell us, that the Doctor avouches of all catholics, whom ignorance cannot excuse, that they cannot be saved. Certainly, then, he must needs esteem them to want something necessary to salvation. And then in the Doctor's saying, it is remarkable that he confesses your errors to some men not damnable; which clearly imports, that, according to his judgment, they were damnable in themselves, though by accident, to them who lived and died in invincible ignorance, and with repentance, they might prove not damnable. A third is, that these assertions, "the Roman errors are in themselves not damnable, and yet it is damnable for me (who know them to be errors) to hold and confess them, are absolutely inconsistent:" which is false; for, be the matter what it will, yet for a man to tell a lie, especially in matters of religion, cannot but be damnable. How much more, then, to go on in a course of lying,

by professing to believe these things Divine truths, which he verily believes to be falsehoods and fables? A fourth is, that—if we erred in thinking, that your church holds error, this error, or erroneous conscience, might be rectified and deposed by judging those errors not damnable. For what repugnance is there between these two suppositions, that you do hold some errors, and that they are not damnable? And if there be no repugnance between them, how can the belief of the latter remove, or destroy, or, if it be erroneous, rectify the belief of the former? Nay, seeing there is a manifest consent between them, how can it be avoided, but the belief of the latter will maintain and preserve the belief of the former? For who can conjoin in one brain, not cracked, (pardon me if I speak to you in your own words) these assertions—In the Roman church there are errors not damnable; and, in the Roman church there are no errors at all? Or, what sober understanding would ever think this a good collection—I esteem the errors of the Roman church not damnable; therefore I do amiss to think that she errs at all? If, therefore, you would have us alter our judgment, that your church is erroneous, your only way is to shew your doctrine consonant, at least not evidently repugnant, to Scripture and reason. For, as for this device, this short cut of persuading ourselves, that you hold no errors, because we believe your errors not damnable, assure yourself it will never hold.

106. A fifth falsehood is—That we daily do this favour for protestants, you must mean (if you speak consequently) to judge they have no errors, because we judge they have none damnable.

Which the world knows to be most untrue. And for our continuing in their communion, notwithstanding their errors, the justification hereof is not so much, that their errors are not damnable, as that they required not the belief and profession of these errors among the conditions of their communion. Which puts a main difference between them and you: because we may continue in their communion without professing to believe their opinions, but in yours we cannot. A sixth is—That according to the doctrines of all divines, there is not any difference between a speculative persuasion of conscience, of the unlawfulness of any thing, and a practical dictamen, that the same thing is unlawful.—For these are but divers words signifying the same thing; neither is such persuasion wholly speculative, but tending to practice; nor such a dictamen wholly practical, but grounded upon speculation. A seventh is—That protestants did only conceive in speculation, that the church of Rome erred in some doctrines, and had not also a practical dictamen, that it was damnable for them to continue in the profession of these errors. An eighth is—That it is not lawful to separate from any church's communion, for errors not appertaining to the substance of faith: —which is not universally true, but with this exception, unless that church requires the belief and profession of them. The ninth is—That Dr. Potter teacheth, that Luther was bound to forsake the house of God, for an unnecessary light, confuted manifestly by Dr. Potter in this very place; for, by the house of God, you mean the Roman church, and of her the Doctor says, that a necessity did lie upon him, even under pain of damna-

tion, to forsake the church of Rome in her errors. This sure is not to say, that he was obliged to forsake her, for an unnecessary light. The tenth is covertly vented in your intimation—That Luther and his followers were the proper cause of the Christian world's combustion: whereas, indeed, the true cause of this lamentable effect, was your violent persecution of them, for serving God according to their conscience, which, if it be done to you, you condemn of horrible impiety; and, therefore, may not hope to be excused if you do it to others.

107. The eleventh is—That our first reformers ought to have doubted whether their opinions were certain.—Which is to say, that they ought to have doubted of the certainty of Scripture; which, in formal and express terms, contains many of these opinions. And the reason of this assertion is very vain:—for, though they had not an absolute infallibility promised unto them, yet may they be of some things infallibly certain. As Euclid sure was not infallible; yet was he certain enough, that twice two were four, and that every whole was greater than a part of that whole. And so, though Calvin and Melancthon were not infallible in all things, yet they might and did know well enough, that your Latin service was condemned by St. Paul, and that the communion in both kinds was taught by our Saviour. The twelfth and last is this—That your church was in peaceable possession, (you must mean of her doctrine, and the professors of it) and enjoyed prescription for many ages. For, besides that doctrine is not a thing that may be possessed; and the professors of it were the church itself, and in

nature of possessors (if we speak improperly), rather than the thing possessed, with whom no man hath reason to be offended, if they think fit to quit their own possession: I say, that the possession, which the governors of your church held for some ages of the party governed, was not peaceable, but got by fraud, and held by violence.

108. These are the falsehoods which in this answer offered themselves to any attentive reader, and that which remains is mere impertinence. As, First, That a pretence of conscience will not serve to justify separation from being schismatical. Which is true, but little to the purpose, seeing it was not an erroneous persuasion, much less an hypocritical pretence, but a true and well-grounded conviction of conscience, which Dr. Potter alleged to justify protestants from being schismatical. And, therefore, though seditious men in church and state may pretend conscience for a cloak of their rebellion; yet this, I hope, hinders not, but that a honest man ought to obey his rightly-informed conscience, rather than the unjust commands of his tyrannous superiors: otherwise, with what colour can you defend either your own refusing the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, or the ancient martyrs, and apostles, and prophets, who oftentimes disobeyed the commands of men in authority, and for their disobedience made no other but this apology, "We must obey God rather than men?" It is, therefore, most apparent, that this answer must be merely impertinent; seeing it will serve against the martyrs, and apostles, and prophets, and even against yourselves, as well as against protestants. To as little purpose is your rule out of Lyrinensis against

them that followed Luther, seeing they pretend and are ready to justify, that they forsook not, with the Doctor, the faith, but only the corruption of the church. As vain altogether is that which follows: that in cases of uncertainty we are not to leave our superior, nor cast off his obedience, nor publicly oppose his decrees. From whence it will follow very evidently, that seeing it is not a matter of faith, but a disputed question amongst you, whether the oath of allegiance be lawful, that either you acknowledge not the king your superior, or do against conscience, in opposing his and the kingdom's decree, requiring the taking of this oath. This good use, I say, may very fairly be made of it, and is by men of your religion. But, then, it is so far from being a confutation, that it is rather a confirmation, of Dr. Potter's assertion. For he that useth these words, doth he not plainly import, (and such was the case of protestants) that we are to leave our superiors, cast off obedience to them, and publicly to oppose their decrees, when we are certain (as protestants were) that what they command, God doth countermand? Lastly, St. Cyprian's example is against protestants impertinently, and even ridiculously, alleged. For what if St. Cyprian, holding his opinion true, but not necessary, condemned no man (much less any church) for holding the contrary? Yet, methinks, this should lay no obligation upon Luther to do likewise; seeing he held his own opinions not only true, but also necessary; and the doctrine of the Roman church not only false, but damnable. And, therefore, seeing the condition and state of the parties censured by St. Cyprian and Luther was so dif-

ferent, no marvel though their censures also were different according to the supposed merit of the parties delinquent. For, as for your obtruding again upon us, that we believe the points of difference not fundamental or necessary, you have been often told, that it is a calumny. We hold your errors as damnable in themselves as you do ours; only by accident, through invincible ignorance, we hope they are not unpardonable: and you also profess to think the same of ours.

109. Ad §. 42. The former part of this discourse, grounded on Dr. Potter's words, p. 105. I have already in passing examined and confuted: I add in this place, 1. That though the Doctor says, "It is not fit for any private man to oppose his judgment to the public;" that is, his own judgment, and bare authority: yet he denies not, but occasions may happen, wherein it may be warrantable to oppose his reason, or the authority of Scripture, against it; and is not then to be esteemed to oppose his own judgment to the public, but the judgment of God to the judgment of men. Which his following words seem to import: "he may offer his opinion to be considered of, so he do it with evidence, or great probability of Scripture or reason." Secondly, I am to tell you, that you have no ground from him, to interline his words with that interrogatory ("his own conceits, and yet grounded upon evidence of Scripture?") For these things are in his words opposed, and not confounded; and the latter not intended for a repetition, (as you mistake it) but for an antithesis of the former. "He may offer (saith he) his opinion to be considered of, so he do it with evidence of Scripture. But if he will factiously advance his

own conceits, (that is, say I, clear contrary to your gloss) such as have not evident nor very probable ground in Scripture, (for these conceits are properly his own) he may justly be branded," &c. Now that this of the two is the better gloss, it is proved by your own interrogation. For that imputes absurdity to Dr. Potter, for calling them a man's own conceits, which were grounded upon evidence of Scripture. And, therefore, you have shewed little candour or equity, in fastening upon them this absurd construction; they not only bearing, but even requiring, another more fair and more sensible. Every man ought to be presumed to speak sense, rather than nonsense; coherently, rather than contradictiously, if his words be fairly capable of a better construction. For Mr. Hooker, if, writing against puritans, he had said something unawares, that might give advantage to papists, it were not inexcusable; seeing it is a matter of such extreme difficulty, to hold such a temper in opposing one extreme opinion, as not to seem to favour the other. Yet if his words be rightly considered, there is nothing in them that will do you any service. For though he says, that men are bound to do whatsoever the sentence of final decision shall determine, as it is plain men are bound to yield such an obedience to all courts of civil judicature; yet he says not, they are bound to think that determination lawful, and that sentence just. Nay, it is plain, he says, that they must do according to the judges' sentences, though in their private opinion it seem unjust. As if I be cast wrongfully in a suit at law, and sentenced to pay a hundred pounds, I am bound to pay the money; yet I know no law of God or man, that binds me

in conscience to acquit the judge of error in his sentence. The question therefore being only what men ought to think, it is vain for you to tell us what Mr. Hooker says at all; for Mr. Hooker, though an excellent man, was but a man: and much more vain, to tell us out of him, what men ought to do, for point of external obedience; when, in the very same place, he supposeth and alloweth, that in their private opinion they may think this sentence, to which they yield a passive obedience, to swerve utterly from that which is right. If you will draw his words to such a construction, as if he had said—They must think the sentence of judicial and final decision just and right, though it seem in their private opinion to swerve utterly from what is right—it is manifest you make him contradict himself, and make him say, in effect, they must think thus, though, at the same time, they think the contrary. Neither is there any necessity, that he must either acknowledge the universal infallibility of the church, or drive men into dissembling against their conscience, seeing nothing hinders, but I may obey the sentence of a judge, paying the money he awards me to pay, or foregoing the house or land which he hath judged from me, and yet withal plainly profess, that in my conscience I conceive his judgment erroneous. To which purpose, they have a saying in France, that "Whosoever is cast in any cause, hath liberty, for ten days after, to rail at his judges."

110. This answer to this place, the words themselves offered me, even as they are alleged by you: but upon perusal of the place in the author himself, I find that here, as elsewhere, you and

Mr. Brerely wrong him extremely. For, mutilating his words, you make him say that absolutely, which he there expressly limits to some certain cases. "In litigious and controverted causes of such a quality (saith he) the will of God is, to have them do whatsoever the sentence of judicial and final decision shall determine." Observe, I pray, he says not absolutely, and in all causes, this is the will of God: but only in litigious causes, of the quality of those whereof he there intreats. In such matters, as have plain Scripture or reason neither for them, nor against them, and wherein men are persuaded this or that way, upon their own only probable collection; in such cases, "this persuasion (saith he) ought to be fully settled in men's hearts, that the will of God is, that they should not disobey the certain commands of their lawful superiors, upon uncertain grounds; but do that which the sentence of judicial and final decision shall determine." For the purpose, a question there is, whether a surplice may be worn in Divine service? The authority of superiors enjoins this ceremony, and neither Scripture nor reason plainly forbids it. *Sempronius*, notwithstanding, is, by some inducements, which he confesses to be only probable, led to this persuasion, that the thing is unlawful. The query is, whether he ought for matter of practice to follow the injunction of authority, or his own private and only probable persuasion? Mr. Hooker resolves for the former, upon this ground, that the certain commands of the church we live in, are to be obeyed in all things, not certainly unlawful. Which rule is your own, and by you extended to the commands of all superiors, in the

very next section before this, in these words: "In cases of uncertainty we are not to leave our superior, nor cast off his obedience, or publicly oppose his decrees." And yet, if a man should conclude upon you, that either you make all superiors universally infallible, or else drive men into perplexities and labyrinths of doing against conscience, I presume you would not think yourself fairly dealt with; but allege, that your words are not extended to all cases, but limited to cases of uncertainty. As little therefore ought you to make this deduction from Mr. Hooker's words, which are apparently also restrained to cases of uncertainty. For as for requiring a blind and unlimited obedience to ecclesiastical decisions universally and in all cases, even when plain texts or reason seems to control them, Mr. Hooker is as far from making such an idol of ecclesiastical authority, as the puritans, whom he writes against: "I grant (saith he) that proof derived from the authority of man's judgment, is not able to work that assurance which doth grow by a stronger proof. And therefore although ten thousand general councils would set down one and the same definitive sentence, concerning any point of religion whatsoever; yet one demonstrative reason alleged, or one manifest testimony cited from the word of God himself to the contrary, could not choose but overweigh them all: inasmuch as for them to be deceived, it is not impossible; it is, that demonstrative reason, or Divine testimony, should deceive." And again, "Whereas it is thought, that, especially with the church, and those that are called, man's authority ought not to prevail; it must and doth prevail even with them,

yea, with them especially, as far as equity requireth, and farther we maintain it not. For men to be tied and led by authority, as it were with a kind of captivity of judgment; and, though there be reason to the contrary, not to listen to it, but to follow like beasts the first in the herd, this were brutish." Again, "That authority of men should prevail with men either against or above reason, is no part of our belief. Companies of learned men, be they never so great and reverend, are to yield unto reason, the weight whereof is no whit prejudiced by the simplicity of his person which doth allege it; but, being found to be sound and good, the bare opinion of men to the contrary must of necessity stoop and give place." Thus Mr. Hooker in his 7th §. book ii. which place, because it is far distant from that which is alleged by you, the oversight of it might be excusable, did you not impute it to Dr. Potter as a fault, that he cites some clauses of some books, without reading the whole. But besides, in that very section, out of which you take this corrupted sentence, he hath very pregnant words to the same effect: "As for the orders established, such equity and reason favour that which is in being, till orderly judgment of decision be given against it, it is but justice to exact of you, and perverseness in you it would be to deny thereunto your willing obedience. Not that I judge it a thing allowable, for men to observe those laws, which in their hearts they are steadfastly persuaded to be against the law of God: but your persuasion in this case ye are all bound for the time to suspend; and, in otherwise doing, ye offend against God, by troubling his church without just and necessary cause.

Be it that there are some reasons inducing you to think hardly of our laws: are those reasons demonstrative, are they necessary, or but mere probabilities only? An argument necessary and demonstrative is such, as, being proposed to any man, and understood, the mind cannot choose but inwardly assent. Any one such reason dischargeth, I grant, the conscience, and setteth it at full liberty. For the public approbation given by the body of this whole church, unto those things which are established, doth make it but probable, that they are good. And therefore unto a necessary proof, that they are not good, it must give place." This plain declaration of his judgment in this matter, this express limitation of his former resolution, he makes in the very same section, which affords your former quotation; and therefore what apology can be made for you, and your storehouse, Mr. Brerely, for dissembling of it, I cannot possibly imagine.

111. Dr. Potter, p. 131, says, that the errors of the Donatists and Novatians were not in themselves heresies, nor could be made so by the church's determination: but that the church's intention was only to silence disputes, and to settle peace and unity in her government: which because they factiously opposed, they were justly esteemed schismatic. From hence you conclude, that the same condemnation must pass against the first reformers, seeing they also opposed the commands of the church, imposed on them, for silencing all disputes, and settling peace and unity in government. But this collection is deceitful, and the reason is, because, though the first reformers, as well as the Donatists and Novatians,

opposed herein the commands of the visible church, that is, of a great part of it: yet the reformers had reason, nay necessity, to do so, the church being then corrupted with damnable errors; which was not true of the church, when it was opposed by the Novatians and Donatists. And therefore, though they, and the reformers, did the same action, yet doing it upon different grounds, it might in these merit applause, and in them condemnation.

112. Ad §. 43. The next section hath in it some objections against Luther's person, and none against his cause, which alone I have undertaken to justify, and therefore I pass it over. Yet this I promise, that when you, or any of your side, shall publish a good defence of all that your popes have said and done, especially of them whom Bellarmine believes, in such a long train, to have gone to the devil, then you shall receive an ample apology for all the actions and words of Luther. In the meantime, I hope, all reasonable and equitable judges will esteem it not unpardonable in the great and heroical spirit of Luther, if, being opposed and perpetually baited with a world of furies, he was transported sometimes, and made somewhat furious. As for you, I desire you to be quiet, and to demand no more, whether God be wont to send such furies to preach the gospel? Unless you desire to hear of your killing of kings, massacreing of people, blowing up of parliaments; and have a mind to be asked, whether it be probable, that that should be God's cause, which needs to be maintained by such devilish means.

113. Ad §. 44, 45. In the two next particles, which are all of this chapter that remain unspoken

to, you spend a great deal of reading, and wit, and reason against some men, who, pretending to honour and believe the doctrine and practice of the visible church, (you mean your own) and condemning their forefathers, who forsook her, say they would not have done so, yet remain divided from her communion. Which men, in my judgment, cannot be defended: for if they believe the doctrine of your church, then must they believe this doctrine, that they are to return to your communion. And therefore, if they do not so, it cannot be avoided but they must be αὐτοκατάκριτοι, and so I leave them; only I am to remember you, that these men cannot pretend to be protestants, because they pretend to believe your doctrine, which is opposite in diameter unto the doctrine of protestants; and therefore, in a work which you profess to have written merely against protestants, all this might have been spared.

CHAP. VI.

That Luther and the rest of protestants have added heresy unto schism.

1. "BECAUSE vice is best known by the contrary virtue, we cannot well determine what heresy is, nor who be heretics, but by the opposite virtue of faith, whose nature being once understood, as far as belongs to our present purpose, we shall pass on with ease to the definition of heresy, and so be able to discern who be heretics. And this I intend to do, not by entering into such particular questions, as are controverted between catholics and protestants, but only by applying some general grounds, either already proved, or else yielded to on all sides.

2. "Almighty God having ordained man to a supernatural end of beatitude by supernatural means, it was requisite that his understanding should be enabled to apprehend that end and means by a supernatural knowledge: and because if such a knowledge were no more than probable, it could not be able sufficiently to overbear our will, and encounter with human probabilities, being backed with the strength of flesh and blood; it was further necessary, that this supernatural knowledge should be most certain and infallible; and that faith should believe nothing more certainly than that itself is a most certain belief, and so be able to beat down all gay probabilities of human opinion. And because the aforesaid means

and end of beatifical vision do far exceed the reach of natural wit, the certainty of faith could not always be joined with such evidence of reason, as is wont to be found in the principles or conclusions of human natural sciences, that so all flesh might not glory in the arm of flesh, but he 'who glories, should glory * in our Lord.' Moreover, it was expedient, that our belief or assent to Divine truths, should not only be unknown or inevident by any human discourse, but that absolutely also it should be obscure in itself, and (ordinarily speaking) be void even of supernatural evidence, that so we might have occasion to actuate and testify the obedience which we owe to our God, not only by submitting our will to his will and commands, but by subjecting also our understanding to his wisdom and words, captivating (as the apostle speaks) the same understanding † to the obedience of faith; which occasion had been wanting, if Almighty God had made clear to us the truths which now are certainly, but not evidently, presented to our minds: for where truth doth manifestly open itself, not obedience, but necessity, commands our assent. For this reason, divines teach, that the objects of faith being not evident to human reason, it is in man's power, not only to abstain from believing, by suspending our judgment, or exercising no act one way or other; but also to disbelieve, that is, to believe the contrary of that which faith proposeth; as the examples of innumerable arch heretics can bear witness. This obscurity of faith we learn from Holy Scripture, according to those words of the apostle, 'faith is

* 2 Cor. x. 17. † 2 Cor. x. 5.

the * substance of things to be hoped for, the argument of things not appearing.' And, 'we see now by a glass † in a dark manner: but then face to face.' And accordingly St. Peter saith, 'which you do well attending unto, as to ‡ a candle shining in a dark place.'

3. "Faith being then obscure, (whereby it differeth from natural sciences) and yet being most certain and infallible (wherein it surpasseth human opinion), it must rely upon some motive and ground, which may be able to give it certainty, and yet not release it from obscurity. For if this motive, ground, or formal object of faith, were anything evidently presented to our understanding; and if, also, we did evidently know, that it had a necessary connexion with the articles which we believe, our assent to such articles could not be obscure, but evident; which, as we said, is against the nature of our faith. If, likewise, the motive or ground of our faith were obscurely propounded to us, but were not in itself infallible, it would leave our assent in obscurity, but could not endue it with certainty. We must, therefore, for the ground of our faith, find out a motive obscure to us, but most certain in itself, that the act of faith may remain both obscure and certain. Such a motive as this can be no other but the Divine authority of Almighty God, revealing or speaking those truths which our faith believes: for it is manifest, that God's infallible testimony may transfuse certainty to our faith, and yet not draw it out of obscurity; because no human discourse or demonstration can evince, that God re-

* Heb. xi. 1. † 1 Cor. xiii. 12. ‡ 2 Pet. i. 19.

vealeth any supernatural truth, since God had been no less perfect than he is, although he had never revealed any of those objects which we now believe.

4. "Nevertheless, because Almighty God, out of his infinite wisdom and sweetness, doth concur with his creatures in such sort as may befit the temper and exigence of their natures; and because man is a creature endued with reason, God doth not exact of his will or understanding any other than, as the apostle saith, *rationabile* * *obsequium*, an obedience sweetened with good reason—which could not so appear, if our understanding were summoned to believe with certainty things no way represented as infallible and certain. And, therefore, Almighty God, obliging us, under pain of eternal damnation, to believe with greatest certainty divers verities not known by the light of natural reason, cannot fail to furnish our understanding with such inducements, motives, and arguments, as may sufficiently persuade any mind, which is not partial or passionate, that the objects which we believe proceed from an authority so wise, that it cannot be deceived, and so good, that it cannot deceive; according to the words of David, 'Thy testimonies are made † credible exceedingly.' These inducements are by divines called *argumenta credibilitatis*, 'arguments of credibility,' which, though they cannot make us evidently see what we believe, yet they evidently convince, that in true wisdom and prudence the objects of faith deserve credit, and ought to be accepted as things revealed by God: for without such reasons and

* Rom. xii. 1. † Psal. xcii.

inducements, our judgment of faith could not be conceived prudent, Holy Scripture telling us, that 'he who soon * believes, is light of heart.' By these arguments and inducements our understanding is both satisfied with evidence of credibility, and the objects of faith retain their obscurity; because it is a different thing to be evidently credible, and evidently true; as those, who were present at the miracles wrought by our blessed Saviour, and his apostles, did not evidently see their doctrine to be true (for then it had not been faith, but science, and all had been necessitated to believe, which we see fell out otherwise), but they were evidently convinced, that the things, confirmed by such miracles, were most credible, and worthy to be embraced as truths revealed by God.

5. "These evident arguments of credibility are in great abundance found in the visible church of Christ, perpetually existing on earth: for that there hath been a company of men, professing such and such doctrines, we have from our next predecessors, and these from theirs upwards, till we come to the apostles, and our blessed Saviour; which gradation is known by evidence of sense, by reading books, or hearing what one man delivers to another. And, it is evident, that there was neither cause nor possibility that men, so distant in place, so different in temper, so repugnant in private ends, did or could agree to tell one and the self-same thing, if it had been but a fiction invented by themselves, as ancient Tertullian well saith: 'How is it likely, that so many † and so

* Eccles. xix. 4. † Præscript. c. xxviii.

great churches should err in one faith? Among many events there is not one issue; the error of the churches must needs have varied. But that which among many is found to be one, is not mistaken, but delivered. Dare then any body say, that they erred who delivered it?' With this never-interrupted existence of the church are joined the many and great miracles wrought by men of that congregation or church; the sanctity of the persons; the renowned victories over so many persecutions, both of all sorts of men, and of the infernal spirits; and, lastly, the perpetual existence of so holy a church. Being brought up to the apostles themselves, she comes to partake of the same assurance of truth, which they, by so many powerful ways, did communicate to their doctrine, and to the church of their times, together with the Divine certainty which they received from our blessed Saviour himself, revealing to mankind what he heard from his Father; and so we conclude with Tertullian, 'We receive it from the churches, the churches * from the apostles, the apostles from Christ, Christ from his Father:' and if we once interrupt this line of succession, most certainly made known by means of holy tradition, we cannot conjoin the present church and doctrine with the church and doctrine of the apostles, but must invent some new means and arguments, sufficient of themselves to find out and prove a true church and faith, independently of the preaching and writing of the apostles; neither of which can be known but by tradition; as is truly observed by Tertullian, saying, 'I will prescribe, that † there

* Præscript. c. xxi. xxxvii. † Ibid. c. xxi.

is no means to prove what the apostles preached, but by the same churches which they founded.

6. "Thus then we are to proceed:—By evidence of manifest and incorrupt tradition, I know that there hath always been a never-interrupted succession of men from the apostles' time, believing, professing, and practising such and such doctrines: by evident arguments of credibility, as miracles, sanctity, unity, &c. and by all those ways, whereby the apostles, and our blessed Saviour himself, confirmed their doctrine, we are assured, that what the said never-interrupted church proposeth, doth deserve to be accepted and acknowledged as a Divine truth: by evidence of sense, we see that the same church proposeth such and such doctrines as Divine truths; that is, as revealed and testified by Almighty God. By this Divine testimony we are infallibly assured of what we believe: and so the last period, ground, motive, and formal object of our faith, is the infallible testimony of that supreme verity, which neither can deceive, nor be deceived.

7. "By this orderly deduction our faith cometh to be endued with those qualities, which we said were requisite thereto, namely—certainty, obscurity, and prudence. *Certainty* proceeds from the infallible testimony of God, propounded and conveyed to our understanding by such a mean as is infallible in itself, and to us is evidently known, that it proposeth this point or that, and which can manifestly declare in what sense it proposeth them: which means we have proved to be the only visible church of Christ. *Obscurity*, from the manner in which God speaks to mankind, which ordinarily is such, that it doth not manifestly shew

the person who speaks, nór the truth of the thing spoken. *Prudence* is not wanting, because our faith is accompanied with so many arguments of credibility, that every well-disposed person may and ought to judge, that the doctrines so confirmed deserve to be believed, as proceeding from Divine authority.

8. "And thus, from what hath been said, we may easily gather the particular nature or definition of faith. For—it is a voluntary, or free, infallible, obscure assent to some truth, because it is testified by God, and is sufficiently propounded to us for such; which proposal is ordinarily made by the visible church of Christ. I say, sufficiently proposed by the church; not that I purpose to dispute, whether the proposal of the church enter into the formal object, or motive of faith; or whether an error be a heresy, formally and precisely, because it is against the proposition of the church, as if such proposal were the formal object of faith, which Dr. Potter to no purpose at all labours so very hard to disprove: but I only affirm that when the church propounds any truth, as revealed by God, we are assured, that it is such indeed; and so it instantly grows to be a fit object for Christian faith, which inclines and enables us to believe whatsoever is duly presented, as a thing revealed by Almighty God. And in the same manner we are sure, that whosoever opposeth any doctrine proposed by the church, doth thereby contradict a truth, which is testified by God: as when any lawful superior notifies his will, by the means, and, as it were, proposal, of some faithful messenger, the subject of such a superior, in performing or neglecting what is delivered by the messenger,

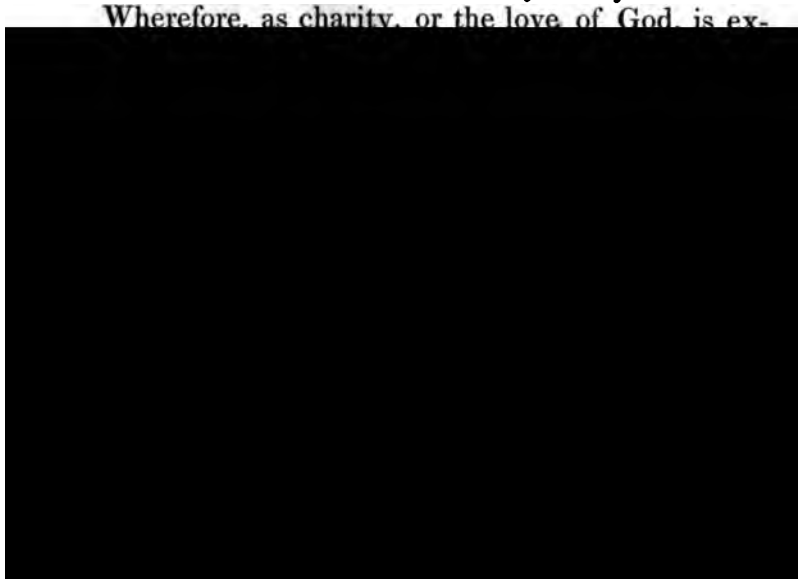
is said to obey or disobey his own lawful superior. And, therefore, because the testimony of God is notified by the church, we may, and we do, most truly say, that not to believe what the church proposeth, is to deny God's holy word or testimony signified to us by the church, according to that saying of St. Irenæus: 'We need not go * to any other to seek the truth, which we may easily receive from the church.'

9. "From this definition of faith we may also know what heresy is, by taking the contrary terms, as heresy is contrary to faith, and saying—heresy is a voluntary error against that which God hath revealed, and the church hath proposed for such. Neither doth it import, whether the error concern points in themselves great or small, fundamental or not fundamental: for more being required to an act of virtue than of vice, if any truth, though never so small, must be believed by faith, as soon as we know it to be testified by Divine revelation; much more will it be a formal heresy to deny any the least point sufficiently propounded as a thing witnessed by God.

10. "This Divine faith is divided into actual and habitual. *Actual* faith, or faith actuated, is when we are in act of consideration, and belief of some mystery of faith: for example, that our Saviour Christ is true God and man, &c. *Habitual* faith is that from which we are denominated faithful, or believers, as by actual faith they are styled believing. This habit of faith is a quality enabling us most firmly to believe objects above human discourse, and it remaineth permanently in our

* Lib. iii. cont. Hæres. c. iv.

soul, even when we are sleeping, or not thinking of any mystery of faith. This is the first among the three theological virtues. For charity unites us to God, as he is infinitely good in himself: hope ties us to him, as he is unspeakably good to us: faith joins us to him, as he is the supreme immoveable verity. Charity relies on his goodness; hope on his power; faith on his Divine wisdom. From hence it followeth, that faith, being one of the virtues which divines term *infused* (that is, which cannot be acquired by human wit, or industry, but are in their nature and essence supernatural), it hath this property; that it is not destroyed by little and little, (contrarily to the habits called *acquisiti*, that is, gotten by human endeavour; which, as they are successively produced, so also are they lost successively, or by little and little) but it must either be conserved entire, or wholly destroyed: and, since it cannot stand entire with any one act, which is directly contrary, it must be totally overthrown, and, as it were, demolished and razed by every such act. Wherefore, as charity, or the love of God, is ex-



deadly sin. But it is likewise true, that this rule is not general for all sorts of sins: there being some so inexcusably wicked of their own nature, that no smallness of matter, nor paucity in number, can defend them from being deadly sins. For, to give an instance, what blasphemy against God, or voluntary false oath, is not a deadly sin? Certainly none at all, although the salvation of the whole world should depend upon swearing such a falsehood. The like happeneth in our present case of heresy, the iniquity whereof, redounding to the injury of God's supreme wisdom and goodness, is always great and enormous. They were no precious stones which David* picked out of the water to encounter Goliah; and yet if a man take from the number but one, and say there were but four, against the Scriptures affirming them to have been five, he is instantly guilty of a damnable sin. Why? Because by this subtraction of *one*, he doth deprive God's word and testimony of *all* credit and infallibility: for if ever he could deceive, or be deceived, in any *one* thing, it were but wisdom to suspect him in *all*. And seeing every heresy opposeth some truth revealed by God, it is no wonder that no one can be excused from deadly and damnable sin: for, if voluntary blasphemy and perjury, which are opposite only to the infused moral virtue of religion, can never be excused from mortal sin; much less can heresy be excused, which opposeth the theological virtue of faith.

11. "If any object, that schism may seem to be a greater sin than heresy, because the virtue of

* Reg. i. 17.

charity (to which schism is opposite) is greater than faith; according to the apostle, saying, 'Now there remain *faith, hope, charity; but the greater of these is charity;' St. Thomas answers in these words: 'Charity hath two objects; one principal, to wit, the Divine goodness;† and another secondary, namely, the good of our neighbour: but schism, and other sins, which are committed against our neighbour, are opposite to charity in respect of this secondary good, which is less than the object of faith, which is God, as he is the prime verity, on which faith doth rely; and therefore these sins are less than infidelity.' He takes infidelity after a general manner, as it comprehends heresy, and other vices against faith.

12. "Having therefore sufficiently declared wherein heresy consists, let us come to prove that which we proposed in this chapter: where I desire it to be still remembered, that the visible catholic church cannot err damnably, as Dr. Potter confesseth; and that, when Luther appeared, there was no other visible true church of Christ, disagreeing from the Roman, as we have demonstrated in the next precedent chapter.

13. "Now, that Luther and his followers cannot be excused from formal heresy, I prove by these reasons:—To oppose any truth propounded by the visible true church, as revealed by God, is formal heresy, as we have shewed out of the definition of heresy; but Luther, Calvin, and the rest, did oppose divers truths propounded by the visible church, as revealed by God; yea, they did therefore oppose her, because she propounded, as Di-

* 1 Cor. xiii. 13. † 2, 2. q. 39. ar. 2. in corp. et ad 3.

vine revealed truths, things which they judged either to be false, or human inventions: therefore they committed formal heresy.

14. "Moreover, every error, against any doctrine revealed by God, is damnable heresy, whether the matter in itself be great or small, as I proved before; and, therefore, either the protestants, or the Roman church, must be guilty of formal heresy, because one of them must err against the word and testimony of God: but you grant (perforce) that the Roman church doth not err damnably; and I add, that she cannot err damnably, because she is the true catholic church, which you confess cannot err damnably: therefore protestants must be guilty of formal heresy.

15. "Besides, we have shewed, that the visible church is judge of controversies, and therefore must be infallible in all her proposals; which, being once supposed, it manifestly followeth, that to oppose what she delivereth, as revealed by God, is not so much to oppose *her*, as God himself; and therefore cannot be excused from grievous heresy.

16. "Again, If Luther were a heretic, for those points wherein he disagreed from the Roman church, all they who agree with him in those very points must likewise be heretics. Now, that Luther was a formal heretic, I demonstrate in this manner:—To say that God's visible true church is not universal, but confined to one only place or corner of the world, is, according to your own express words,* 'properly heresy against that article of the Creed, wherein we profess to believe

* Page 126.

the holy catholic church :' and you brand Donatus with heresy, because he limited the universal church to Africa. But it is manifest, and acknowledged by Luther himself, and other chief protestants, that Luther's Reformation, when it first began, (and much more for divers ages before) was not universal, nor spread over the world, but was confined to that compass of ground which did contain Luther's body. Therefore his Reformation cannot be excused from formal heresy. If St. Augustine in those times said to the Donatists, 'There are innumerable testimonies* of Holy Scripture, in which it appeareth, that the church of Christ is not only in Africa, as these men with most impudent vanity do rave, but that she is spread over the whole earth;' much more may it be said,—It appeareth, by innumerable testimonies of Holy Scripture, that the church of Christ cannot be confined to the city of Wirtemberg, or to the place where Luther's feet stood, but must be spread over the whole world. It is therefore most impudent vanity and dotage to limit her to Luther's Reformation. In another place, also, this holy father writes no less effectually against Luther than against the Donatists. For having out of those words, 'in thy seed all nations shall be blessed,' proved that God's church must be universal, he saith, why† do you superadd, by saying that Christ remains heir in no part of the earth, except where he may have Donatus for his co-heir? Give me this (universal) church, if it be among you; shew yourselves to be all nations, which we already shew to be blessed in this seed.

* Epist. 50. † De Unit. Eccles. c. vi.

Give us this (church), or else, laying aside all fury, receive her from us.' But it is evident, that Luther could not, when he said, 'at the beginning I was alone,' give us an universal church: therefore happy had he been, if he had then, and his followers would now, 'receive her from us.' And, therefore, we must conclude with the same holy father, saying in another place of the universal church, 'she hath this *most certain mark, that she cannot be hidden: she is then known unto all nations. The sect of Donatus is unknown to many nations; therefore that cannot be she. The sect of Luther (at least when he began, and much more before his beginning) was unknown to many nations; therefore that cannot be she.'

17. "And that it may yet further appear, how perfectly Luther agreed with the Donatists, it is to be noted, that they never taught that the catholic church ought not to extend itself further than that part of Africa where their faction reigned, but only that in fact it was so confined, because all the rest of the church was profaned by communicating with Cæcilianus, whom they falsely affirmed to have been ordained bishop by those who were traditors, or givers up of the Bible to the persecutors to be burned; yea, at that very time they had some of their sect residing in Rome, and sent thither one Victor, a bishop, under colour to take care of their brethren in that city; but, indeed, as Baronius† observeth, that the world might account them catholics, by communicating with the Bishop of Rome, to communicate with whom was ever taken by the an-

* Cont. lit. Petil. l. i. c. civ. † Anno 321. nu. 2. spond.

cient fathers, as an assured sign of being a true catholic. They had also, as St. Augustine witnesseth, a pretended *church in the house and territory of a Spanish lady, called Lucilla, who went flying out of the catholic church, because she had been justly checked by Cæcilianus. And the same saint, speaking of the conference he had with Fortunius, the Donatist, saith, 'Here did he first attempt† to affirm, that his communion was spread over the whole earth, &c. but, because the thing was evidently false, they got out of this discourse by confusion of language; whereby, nevertheless, they sufficiently declared, that they did not hold that the true church ought necessarily to be confined to one place; but only by mere necessity were forced to yield, that it was so in fact, because their sect, which they held to be the only true church, was not spread over the world; in which point Fortunius, and the rest, were more modest, than he who should affirm, that Luther's Reformation, in the very beginning, was 'spread over the whole earth; being, at that time, by many degrees not so far diffused as the sect of the Donatists. I have no desire to prosecute the similitude of protestants with Donatists, by remembering that the sect of these men were begun and promoted by the passion of Lucilla; and who is ignorant what influence two women, the mother and daughter, ministered to protestancy in England? Nor will I stand to observe their very likeness of phrase with the Donatists, who called the chair of Rome the chair of pestilence, and the Roman church a harlot, which is Dr. Potter's

* De Unit. Eccles. c. iii. † Ep. 163.

own phrase; wherein he is less excusable than they, because he maintaineth her to be a true church of Christ; and, therefore, let him duly ponder these words of St. Augustine against the Donatists: 'If I persecute him justly, who detracts* from his neighbour, why should not I persecute him who detracts from the church of Christ, and saith, This is not she, but this is a harlot?' and least of all will I consider, whether you may not be well compared to one Ticonius, a Donatist, who wrote against Parmenianus; likewise a Donatist, who blasphemed that the church of Christ had perished, (as you do even in this your book write against some of your protestant brethren, or, as you call them, zealots among you, who hold the very same, or rather a worse heresy) and yet remained among them, even after Parmenianus had excommunicated him (as those your zealous brethren would proceed against you, if it were in their power); and yet, like Ticonius, you remain in their communion, and come not into that church, which is, hath been, and ever shall be, universal: for which very cause St. Augustine complains of Ticonius, that although he wrote against the Donatists, yet he was of 'a heart † so extremely absurd,' as not to forsake them altogether. And, speaking of the same thing in another place, he observes, that although Ticonius did manifestly confute them, who affirmed that the church had perished; yet 'he saw not (saith this holy father) that which, in good consequence,‡ he should have seen, that those Christians of Africa belonged to

* Conc. 7. super gest. cum Emer.

† De doct. Christ. lib. iii. c. xxx.

‡ Cont. Parm. l. i. c. i.

the church spread over the whole world, who remained united, not with them, who are divided from the communion and unity of the same world, but with such as did communicate with the whole world. But Parmenianus, and the rest of the Donatists, saw that consequence, and resolved rather to settle their mind in obstinacy against the most manifest truth, which Ticonius maintained, than by yielding thereto, to be overcome by those churches in Africa, which enjoyed the communion of that unity, which Ticonius defended, from which they had divided themselves. How fitly these words agree to catholics in England, in respect of the protestants, I desire the reader to consider. But these and the like resemblances of the protestants to the Donatists, I willingly let pass, and only urge the main point—that since Luther's reformed church was not in being for divers centuries before Luther, and yet was (because so forsooth they will needs have it) in the apostles' time, they must of necessity affirm heretically with the Donatists, that the true and unspotted church of Christ perished; and that she which remained on earth was (O blasphemy!) a harlot. Moreover, the same heresy follows out of the doctrine of Dr. Potter and other protestants, that the church may err in points not fundamental, because we have shewed, that every error against any one revealed truth is heresy, and damnable, whether the matter be otherwise of itself great or small. And how can the church more truly be said to perish, than when she is permitted to maintain a damnable heresy? Besides, we will hereafter prove, that by an act of heresy all Divine faith is lost; and to imagine a true

church of faithful persons without any faith, is as much as to fancy a living man without life. It is therefore clear, that, Donatist like, they hold that the church of Christ perished; yea, they are worse than the Donatists, who said, that the church remained at least in Africa; whereas protestants must of necessity be forced to grant, that for a long space before Luther she was no where at all. But let us go forward to other reasons.

18. " The Holy Scripture, and ancient fathers, do assign separation from the visible church as a mark of heresy; according to that of St. John, ' They went out * from us.' And, ' Some who † went out from us.' And, ' Out of you shall ‡ arise men speaking perverse things.' And, accordingly, Vincentius Lyrinensis saith, ' Who ever § began heresies, who did not first separate himself from the universality, antiquity, and consent of the catholic church? But it is manifest, that when Luther appeared, there was no visible church distinct from the Roman, out of which she could depart, as it is likewise well known, that Luther and his followers departed out of her: therefore she is no way liable to this mark of heresy; but protestants cannot possibly avoid it. To this purpose St. Prosper hath these pithy words: a Christian, communicating || with the universal church, ' is a catholic; and he who is divided from her, is a heretic, and antichrist.' But Luther in his first reformation could not communicate with the visible catholic church of those times, because he began his reformation by op-

* 1 John ii. 19. † Acts xv. 24. ‡ Acts xx. 30.
§ Lib. adversus hær. c. xxxiv. || Dimid. temp. c. v.

posing the supposed errors of the then visible church: we must therefore say with St. Prosper, that he was a heretic, &c. Which likewise is no less clearly proved out of St. Cyprian, saying, 'Not we * departed from them, but they from us; and since heresies and schisms are bred afterwards, while they make to themselves divers conventicles, they have forsaken the head and origin of truth.'

19. "And that we might not remain doubtful what separation it is, which is the mark of heresy, the ancient fathers tell us more in particular, that it is from the church of Rome, as it is the see of Peter. And, therefore, Dr. Potter need not to be so hot with us, because we say and write, that the church of Rome, in that sense as she is the mother church of all others, and with which all the rest agree, is truly called the catholic church. St. Jerome, writing to Pope Damasus, saith, 'I am in the communion † of the chair of Peter; I know that the church is built upon that rock. Whosoever shall eat the lamb out of this house, he is profane. If any shall not be in the ark of Noah, he shall perish in the time of the deluge. Whosoever doth not gather with thee doth scatter; that is, he that is not of Christ, is of antichrist.' And elsewhere: 'Which doth he ‡ call his faith? That of the Roman church, or that which is contained in the books of Origen? If he answer, The Roman; then we are catholics, who have translated nothing of the error of Origen.' And yet farther, 'Know thou, that the § Roman

* Lib. de Unitat. Eccles.
† Ep. 57. ad Damas.
‡ Lib. i. Apolog.
§ Ibid. lib. iii.

faith, commended by the voice of the apostle, doth not receive these delusions, though an angel should denounce otherwise than it hath once been preached.' St. Ambrose, recounting how his brother Satyrus inquired for a church, wherein to give thanks for his delivery from shipwreck, saith, 'He called unto * him the bishop, neither did he esteem any favour to be true, except that of the true faith; and he asked of him, whether he agreed with the catholic bishops?' That is, with the Roman church. And having understood that he was a schismatic, that is, separated from the Roman church, he abstained from communicating with him. Where we see the privilege of the Roman church confirmed both by word and deed, by doctrine and practice. And the same saint saith of the Roman church, 'From thence the rites † of venerable communion do flow to all.' St. Cyprian saith, 'They are bold ‡ to sail to the chair of Peter, and to the principal church, from whence priestly unity hath sprung. Neither do they consider, that they are Romans, whose faith was commended by the preaching of the apostle, to whom falsehood cannot have access.' Where we see this holy father joins together the principal church and the chair of Peter; and affirmeth, that falsehood not only hath not had, but cannot have, access to that see. And elsewhere, 'Thou wrotest that I should send § a copy of the same letters to Cornelius, our colleague, that, laying aside all solicitude, he might now be assured that thou didst communicate with him, that is, with

* De obitu Satyri fratris.
† Lib. i. Ep. 4. ad Imperatores.
‡ Epist. 55. ad Cornel.
§ Epist. 52.

the catholic church.' What think you, Mr. Doctor, of these words? Is it so strange a thing to take for one and the same thing, to communicate with the church and pope of Rome, and to communicate with the catholic church? St. Irenæus saith, 'Because it were long to number the successions of all churches, * we declaring the tradition (and faith preached to men, and coming to us by tradition) of the most great, most ancient, and most known church, founded by the two most glorious apostles Peter and Paul, which tradition it hath from the apostles, coming to us by succession of bishops; we confound all those who any way, either by evil complacence of themselves, or vain glory, or by blindness, or ill opinion, do gather otherwise than they ought. For to this church, for a more powerful principality, it is necessary that all churches resort, that is, all faithful people of what place soever; in which (Roman church) the tradition, which is from the apostles, hath always been conserved from those who are every where.' St. Augustine saith, 'It grieves us † to see you so to lie cut off. Number the priests even from the see of Peter, and consider in that order of fathers who succeeded, to whom she is the rock, which the proud gates of hell do not overcome.' And, in another place, speaking of Cæcilianus, he saith, 'He might condemn the conspiring ‡ multitude of his enemies, because he knew himself to be united by communicatory letters, both to the Roman church, in which the principality of the see apostolic did always flou-

* Lib. iii. cont. hær. c. iii. † In Psal. cont. patrem Donati.
‡ Ep. 162.

rish; and to other countries, from whence the gospel came first into Africa.' Ancient Tertullian saith, 'If thou be near Italy, thou hast Rome, whose * authority is near at hand to us; a happy church, into which the apostles have poured all doctrine, together with their blood.' St. Basil, in a letter to the Bishop of Rome, saith, 'In every deed that which was given † by our Lord to thy piety, is worthy of that most excellent voice which proclaimed thee blessed; to wit, that thou mayest discern betwixt that which is counterfeit, and that which is lawful and pure, and without any diminution mayest preach the faith of our ancestors.' Maximinianus, bishop of Constantinople, about twelve hundred years ago, said, 'All the bounds of the earth, who have sincerely acknowledged our Lord, and catholics through the whole world, professing the true faith, look upon the power of the Bishop of Rome, as upon the sun, &c. For the Creator of the world amongst all men of the world elected him, (he speaks of St. Peter) to whom he granted the chair of doctor, to be principally possessed by a perpetual right of privilege; that whosoever is desirous to know any Divine and profound thing, may have recourse to the oracle and doctrine of this instruction.' John, patriarch of Constantinople, more than eleven hundred years ago, in an epistle to Pope Hormisda, writeth thus: 'Because ‡ the beginning of salvation is to conserve the rule of right faith, and in no wise to swerve from the tradition of our forefathers; because the words of our Lord can-

* Præscr. c. xxxvi. † Epist. ad Pont. Rom.
‡ Epist. ad. Hormis. P. P.

not fail, saying, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church: the proofs of deeds have made good those words; because in the see apostolical the catholic religion is always conserved inviolable.' And again, 'We promise hereafter not to recite in the sacred mysteries the names of them who are excluded from the communion of the catholic church; that is to say, who consent not fully with the see apostolic.' Many other authorities of the ancient fathers might be produced to this purpose; but these may serve to shew, that both the Latin and Greek fathers held for a note of being a catholic, or a heretic, to have been united or divided from the see of Rome. And I have purposely alleged only such authorities of fathers, as speak of the privileges of the see of Rome, as of things permanent, and depending on our Saviour's promise to St. Peter, from which a general rule and ground ought to be taken for all ages, because 'Heaven and earth shall * pass; but the word of our Lord shall remain for ever.' So that I here conclude, that, seeing it is manifest that Luther and his followers divided themselves from the see of Rome, they bear the inseparable mark of heresy.

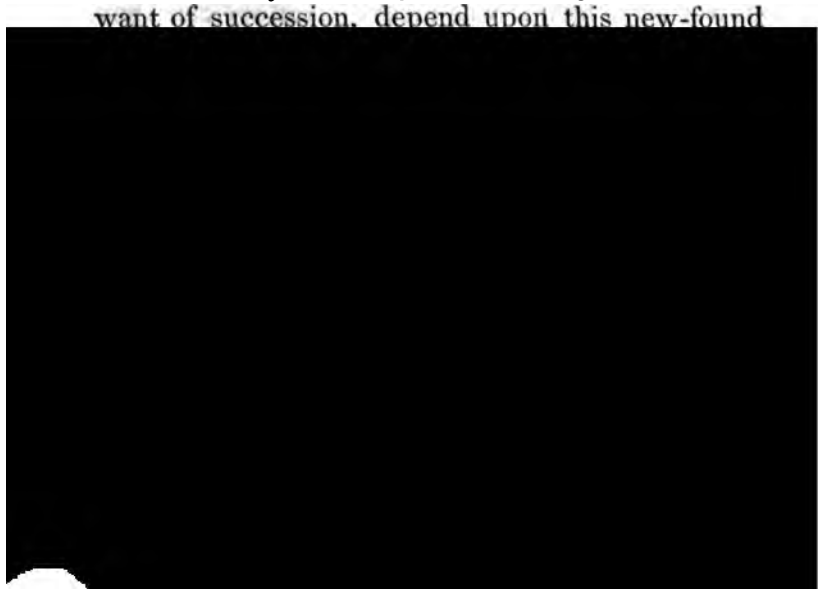
20. "And though my meaning be not to treat the point of ordination or succession in the protestant church, yet because the fathers alleged in the last reason, assign succession as one mark of the true church; I must not omit to say, that, according to the grounds of protestants themselves, they can neither pretend personal succession of bishops, nor succession of doctrine. For whereas succession of

* Matt. xxiv. 35.

bishops signifies a never-interrupted line of persons endued with an indelible quality, which divines call a *character*, which cannot be taken away by deposition, degradation, or other means whatsoever, and endued also with jurisdiction and authority to teach, to preach, to govern the church by laws, precepts, censures, &c. Protestants cannot pretend succession in either of these: for (besides that there was never protestant bishop before Luther, and that there can be no continuance of succession, where there was no beginning to succeed) they commonly acknowledge no character, and consequently must affirm, that when their pretended bishops or priests are deprived of jurisdiction, or degraded, they remain mere lay persons, as before their ordination; fulfilling what Tertullian objects as a mark of heresy, 'To-day a priest, to-morrow * a layman.' For if there be no immoveable character, their power of order must consist only in jurisdiction and authority, or in a kind of moral deputation to some function, which therefore may be taken away by the same power by which it was given. Neither can they pretend succession in authority or jurisdiction: for all the authority or jurisdiction which they had, was conferred by the church of Rome, that is, by the pope: because the whole church collectively doth not meet to ordain bishops or priests, or to give them authority: but, according to their own doctrine, they believe that the pope neither hath, or ought to have, any jurisdiction, power, superiority, pre-eminence, or authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm, which they swear

* Præsc. c. xli.

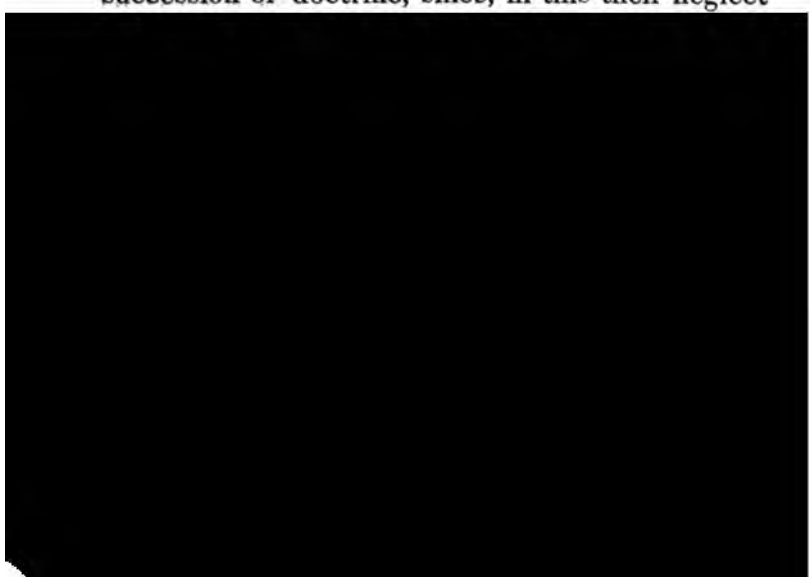
even when they are ordained bishops, priests, and deacons. How then can the pope give jurisdiction, where they swear he neither hath, or ought to have, any? Or, if yet he had, how could they, without schism, withdraw themselves from his obedience? Beside, the Roman church never gave them authority to oppose her, by whom it was given. But grant, their first bishops had such authority from the church of Rome; after the decease of those men, who gave authority to their pretended successors? The primate of England? But from whom had he such authority? And, after his decease, who shall confer authority upon his successors? The temporal magistrate? King Henry, neither a catholic nor a protestant? King Edward, a child? Queen Elizabeth, a woman? An infant of one hour's age is true king in case of his predecessor's decease: but shall your church lie fallow, till that infant king and green head of the church, come to years of discretion? Do your bishops, your hierarchy, your succession, your sacraments, your being or not being heretics, for want of succession, depend upon this new-found



Hath the temporal magistrate authority to preach, to assoil from sins, to inflict excommunications, and other censures? Why hath he not power to excommunicate, as well as to dispense in irregularity, as our late sovereign Lord King James either dispensed with the late Archbishop of Canterbury, or else gave commission to some bishops to do it? And, since they were subject to their primate, and not he to them, it is clear, that they had no power to dispense with him, but that power must proceed from the prince, as superior to them all, and head of the protestant church in England. If he have no such authority, how can he give to others what himself hath not? Your ordination or consecration of bishops and priests, imprinting no character, can only consist in giving a power, authority, jurisdiction, or (as I said before) some kind of deputation to exercise episcopal or priestly functions. If then the temporal magistrate confers this power, &c. he can, nay, he cannot choose but, ordain and consecrate bishops and priests, as often as he confers authority or jurisdiction; and your bishops, as soon as they are designed and confirmed by the king, must *ipso facto* be ordained and consecrated by him without intervention of bishops, or matter and form of ordination: which absurdities you will be more unwilling to grant, than well able to avoid, if you will be true to your own doctrines. The pope, from whom originally you must beg your succession of bishops, never received, nor will nor can acknowledge to receive, any spiritual jurisdiction from any temporal prince; and, therefore, if jurisdiction must be derived from princes, he hath none at all: and yet, either you must acknow-

ledge, that he hath true spiritual jurisdiction, or that yourselves can receive none from him.

21. "Moreover, this new Reformation, or reformed church of protestants, will by them be pretended to be catholic or universal, and not confined to England alone, as the sect of the Donatists was to Africa; and, therefore, it must comprehend all the reformed churches in Germany, Holland, Scotland, France, &c. In which number they of Germany, Holland, and France, are not governed by bishops, nor regard any personal succession, unless of such fat-beneficed bishops as Nicolas Amsfordius, who was consecrated by Luther, (though Luther himself was never bishop) as witnesseth * Dresserus. And, though Scotland hath of late admitted some bishops, I much doubt whether they hold them to be necessary, or of Divine institution; and so their enforced admitting of them, doth not so much furnish that kingdom with personal succession of bishops, as it doth convince them to want succession of doctrine, since, in this their neglect



churches, and yourselves cannot avoid the note of schismatics or heretics, if it were but for participating with such heretical churches: for it is impossible to retain communion with the true catholic church, and yet agree with them who are divided from her by schism or heresy; because that were to affirm, that for the self-same time they could be within and without the catholic church, as proportionably I discoursed in the next precedent chapter, concerning the communicating of moderate protestants with those who maintain that heresy of the latency and invisibility of God's church, where I brought a place of St. Cyprian to this purpose, which the reader may be pleased to review in the 5th chapter, and 17th number.

22. "But, besides this defect in the personal succession of protestant bishops, there is another of great moment; which is, that they want the right form of ordaining bishops and priests, because the manner which they use is so much different from that of the Roman church (at least according to the common opinion of divines), that it cannot be sufficient for the essence of ordination; as I could demonstrate, if this were the proper place of such a treatise; and, will not fail to do, if Dr. Potter give me occasion. In the mean time the reader may be pleased to read the author * cited here in the margent, and then compare the form of our ordination with that of protestants; and to remember, that if the form which they use, either in consecrating bishops, or in ordaining priests, be at least doubtful, they can neither have undoubted priests nor bishops: for priests cannot

* See Adamum Tannerum, tom. iv. disp. 5. quæst. 2. dub. 3, 4

be ordained but by true bishops, nor can any be a true bishop, unless he first be priest. I say, their ordination is at least doubtful; because that sufficeth for my present purpose. For bishops and priests, whose ordination is notoriously known to be doubtful, are not to be esteemed bishops or priests; and no man without sacrilege can receive sacraments from them; all which they administer unlawfully: and (if we except baptism) with manifest danger of invalidity, and with obligation to be at least conditionally repeated; and so protestants must remain doubtful of remission of sins of their ecclesiastical hierarchy, and may not pretend to be a true church; which cannot subsist without undoubted true bishops and priests, nor without due administration of sacraments, which (according to protestants) is an essential note of the true church. And it is a world to observe the proceeding of the English protestants in this point of their ordinations. For, first, An. 3. Edw. 6. cap. 2. when he was a child about twelve years of age, it was enacted, 'That such * form of making and consecrating of bishops and priests, as by six prelates, and six other to be appointed by the king, should be devised, (mark this word, *devised*) and set forth under the great seal, should be used, and none other.' But after this act was repealed, 1 Mar. Sess. 2. insomuch as that when afterward, Anno 6, 7. Reg. Elizabeth, Bishop Bonner being indicted upon a certificate made by Dr. Horne, a protestant bishop of Winchester, for his refusal of the oath of supremacy; and he excepting against the indictment, because Dr. Horne was

* Dyer, fol. 234. Term. Mich. 6, 7. Eliz.

no bishop; all the judges resolved, that his exception was good, if, indeed, Dr. Horne was not bishop; and they were all at a stand, till Anno 8. Eliz. cap. 1. the Act of Edw. 6. was renewed and confirmed, with a particular proviso, that no man should be impeached or molested, by means of any certificate by any bishop or archbishop made before this last act. Whereby it is clear, that they made some doubt of their own ordination, and that there is nothing but uncertainty in the whole business of their ordination, which (forsooth) must depend upon six prelates, the great seal, acts of parliament being contrary one to another, and the like.

23. "But though they want personal succession, yet at least they have succession of doctrine, as they say, and pretend to prove, because they believe as the apostles believed. This is to beg the question, and to take what they may be sure will never be granted. For if they want personal succession and slight ecclesiastical tradition, how will they persuade any man, that they agree with the doctrine of the apostles? We have heard Tertullian saying, 'I will prescribe * (against all heretics) that there is no means to prove what the apostles preached, but by the same churches which they founded.' And St. Irenæus tells us, 'That we may † behold the tradition of the apostles in every church, if men be desirous to hear the truth, and we can number them who were made bishops by the apostles in churches, and their successors even to us.' And the same father in another place saith, 'We ought to obey ‡ those

* Sup. c. v. † Lib. iii. c. v. ‡ Lib. iv. c. xliii.

priests who are in the church, who have succession from the apostles, and who, together with succession in their bishoprics, have received the certain gift of truth.' St. Augustine saith, 'I am kept in the church * by the succession of priests from the very see of Peter the apostle, to whom our Saviour, after his resurrection, committed his sheep to be fed, even to the present bishop.' Origen to this purpose giveth us a good and wholesome rule, (happy, if himself had followed the same!) in these excellent words: 'Since there be many who think † they believe the things which are of Christ, and some are of different opinion from those who went before them; let the preaching of the church be kept, which is delivered by the apostles by order of succession, and remains in the church to this very day; that only is to be believed for truth, which in nothing disagrees from the tradition of the church.' In vain, then, do these men brag of the doctrine of the apostles, unless first they can demonstrate, that they enjoy a continued succession of bishops from the apostles, and can shew us a church, which, according to St. Augustine, is deduced by undoubted succession from the see ‡ of the apostles, even to the present bishops.'

24. "But yet, nevertheless, suppose it were granted, that they agreed with the doctrine of the apostles, this were not sufficient to prove a succession in doctrine. For succession, besides agreement or similitude, doth also require a never-interrupted conveying of such doctrine, from the

* Cont. epist. Fundam. c. iv. † Præf. ad lib. Peri Archon.
‡ Cont. Faust. c. ii.

time of the apostles, till the days of those persons who challenge such a succession. And so St. Augustine saith; we are to believe that gospel, which from the time of the apostles the * church hath brought down to our days, 'by a never-interrupted course of times, and by undoubted succession of connexion.' Now that the Reformation begun by Luther, was interrupted for divers ages before him, is manifest out of history, and by his endeavouring a reformation, which must presuppose abuses. He cannot, therefore, pretend a continued succession of that doctrine which he sought to revive and reduce to the knowledge and practice of men. And they ought not to prove, that they have succession of doctrine, because they agree with the doctrine of the apostles; but contrarily we must infer, that they agree not with the apostles; because they cannot pretend a never-interrupted succession of doctrine from the times of the apostles till Luther. And here it is not amiss to note, that although the Waldenses, Wickliff, &c. had agreed with protestants in all points of doctrine; yet they could not brag of succession from them, because their doctrine hath not been free from interruption, which necessarily crosseth succession.

25. "And as want of succession of persons and doctrine cannot stand with that universality of time, which is inseparable from the catholic church; so likewise the disagreeing sects, which are dispersed through divers countries and nations, cannot help towards that universality of place, wherewith the true church must be endued;

* Lib. xxviii. Cont. Faust. c. ii.

but rather such local multiplication doth more and more lay open their division, and want of succession in doctrine. For the excellent observation of St. Augustine doth punctually agree with all modern heretics; wherein this holy father, having cited these words out of the prophet Ezekiel,* 'My flocks are dispersed upon the whole face of the earth;' he adds this remarkable sentence: 'Not all heretics † are spread over the face of the earth, and yet there are heretics spread over the whole face of the earth, some here, some there; yet they are wanting in no place, they know not one another. One sect, for example, in Africa, another heresy in the East, another in Egypt, another in Mesopotamia. In divers places they are diverse; one mother pride hath begot them all, as our own mother the catholic church hath brought forth all faithful people dispersed throughout the whole world. No wonder, then, if pride breed dissension, and charity union.' And, in another place, applying to heretics those words of the Canticles, 'If thou know not ‡ thyself, go forth, and follow after the steps of the flocks, and feed thy kids;' he saith, 'If thou know not thyself, go § thou forth: I do not cast thee out, but go thou out, that it may be said of thee, They went from us, but they were not of us. Go thou out in the steps of the flocks; not in my steps, but in the steps of the flocks; nor of one flock, but of divers and wandering flocks: and feed thy kids, not as Peter, to whom it is said, Feed my sheep; but feed thy kids in the tabernacles of the pastors, not

* Cap. xxiv.
† Lib. de Pastori. c. viii.
‡ Cant. i.
§ Ep. 48.

in the tabernacle of the pastor, where there is one flock, and one pastor.' In which words this holy father doth set down the marks of heresy, to wit, going out from the church, and want of unity among themselves, which proceed from not acknowledging one supreme and visible pastor and head under Christ. And so it being proved, that protestants have neither succession of persons, nor doctrine, nor universality of time or place, they cannot avoid the just note of heresy.

26. "Hitherto we have brought arguments to prove, that Luther and all protestants are guilty of heresy against the negative precept of faith, which obligeth us, under pain of damnation, not to embrace any one error, contrary to any truth sufficiently propounded as testified or revealed by Almighty God. Which were enough to make good, that among persons, who disagree in any one point of faith, one part only can be saved: yet we will now prove, that whosoever erreth in any one point, doth also break the affirmative precept of faith, whereby we are obliged positively to believe some revealed truth, with an infallible and supernatural faith, which is necessary to salvation, even *necessitate finis*, or *medii*, as divines speak, that is, so necessary, that not any, after he is come to the use of reason, was or can be saved without it, according to the words of the apostle: 'Without faith * it is impossible to please God.'

27. "In the beginning of this chapter I shewed, that to Christian catholic faith are required certainty, obscurity, prudence, and supernaturality: all which conditions we will prove to be wanting

* Heb. xi. 6.

in the belief of protestants, even in those points which are true in themselves, and to which they yield assent, as happeneth in all particulars wherein they agree with us; from whence it will follow, that they, wanting true Divine faith, want means absolutely necessary to salvation.

28. "And, First, That their belief wanteth *certainty*, I prove, because they, denying the universal infallibility of the church, can have no certain ground to know what objects are revealed or testified by God. Holy Scripture is in itself most true and infallible; but without the direction and declaration of the church, we can neither have certain means to know what Scripture is canonical, nor what translations be faithful, nor what is the true meaning of Scripture. Every protestant, as I suppose, is persuaded that his own opinions be true, and that he hath used such means as are wont to be prescribed for understanding the Scripture; as prayer, conferring of divers texts, &c. and yet their disagreements shew, that some of them are deceived: and therefore it is clear, that they have no one certain ground whereon to rely for understanding of Scripture. And seeing they hold all the articles of faith, even concerning fundamental points, upon the self-same ground of Scripture, interpreted, not by the church's authority, but according to some other rules, which, as experience of their contradictions teach, do sometimes fail; it is clear, that the ground of their faith is infallible in no point at all. And albeit sometime it chance to hit on the truth, yet it is likewise apt to lead them to error: as all arch heretics, believing some truths, and withal divers errors, upon the same ground and motive, have in-

deed no true Divine infallible faith, but only a fallible human opinion and persuasion; for if the ground upon which they rely were certain, it could never produce any error.

29. "Another cause of uncertainty, in the faith of protestants, must rise from their distinction of points fundamental and not fundamental: for since they acknowledge, that every error in fundamental points destroyeth the substance of faith, and yet cannot determine what points be fundamental, it followeth, that they must remain uncertain, whether or no they be not in some fundamental error, and so want the substance of faith, without which there can be no hope of salvation.

30. "And that he who erreth against one revealed truth, (as certainly some protestants must do, because contradictory propositions cannot both be true) doth lose all Divine faith, is a very true doctrine delivered by catholic divines with so general a consent, that the contrary is wont to be censured as temerarious. The angelical doctor St. Thomas proposeth this question, * 'Whether he who denieth one article of faith may retain faith of other articles?' And resolves that he cannot; which he proveth, *(argumento sed contra)* because, 'as deadly sin is opposite to charity, so to deny one article of faith is opposite to faith. But charity doth not remain with any one deadly sin; therefore faith doth not remain after the denial of any one article of faith.' Whereof he gives this farther reason; 'because (saith he) the nature of every habit doth depend upon the formal motive and object thereof, which motive being taken

* 2. 2. q. 5. art. 3. in corp.

away, the nature of the habit cannot remain. But the formal object of faith is the supreme truth, as it is manifested in Scriptures, and in the doctrine of the church, which proceeds from the same supreme verity. Whosoever therefore doth not rely upon the doctrine of the church, (which proceeds from the supreme verity manifested in Scriptures) as upon an infallible rule, he hath not the habit of faith, but believes those things which belong to faith by some other means than by faith; as, if one should remember some conclusion, and not know the reason of that demonstration, it is clear, that he hath not certain knowledge, but only opinion; now it is manifest, that he who relies on the doctrine of the church, as upon an infallible rule, will yield his assent to all that the church teacheth: for, if among those things which she teacheth, he hold what he will, and doth not hold what he will not, he doth not rely upon the doctrine of the church, as upon an infallible rule, but only upon his own will. And so it is clear, that a heretic, who with pertinacity denieth one article of faith, is not ready to follow the doctrine of the church in all things: and therefore, it is manifest, that whosoever is a heretic in any one article of faith, concerning other articles hath not faith, but a kind of opinion, or his own will.' Thus far St. Thomas. And afterward, 'A man doth believe* all the articles of faith, for one and the self-same reason, to wit, for the prime verity proposed to us in the Scripture, understood aright according to the doctrine of the church; and therefore, whosoever falls from this reason or motive, is totally

* Ad 2.

deprived of faith.' From this true doctrine we are to infer, that to retain or want the substance of faith, doth not consist in the matter or multitude of the articles, but in the opposition against God's Divine testimony, which is involved in every least error against faith. And since some protestants must needs err, and that they have no certain rule to know why rather one than another, it manifestly follows, that none of them have any certainty for the substance of their faith in any one point. Moreover Dr. Potter being forced to confess, that the Roman church wants not the substance of faith, it follows that she doth not err in any one point against faith, because, as we have seen out of St. Thomas, every such error destroys the substance of faith. Now, if the Roman church did not err in any one point of faith, it is manifest, that protestants err in all those points wherein they are contrary to her. And this may suffice to prove, that the faith of protestants wants infallibility.

31. "And now for the second condition of faith, I say, if protestants have *certainty*, they want *obscurity*, and so have not that faith, which, as the apostle saith, is of things not appearing, or not necessitating our understanding to an assent; for the whole edifice of the faith of protestants is settled on these two principles:—These particular books are canonical Scripture; and the sense and meaning of these canonical Scriptures is clear and evident, at least in all points necessary to salvation. Now these principles being once supposed, it clearly followeth, that what protestants believe as necessary to salvation is evidently known by them to be true, by this argument:—It is certain

and evident, that whatsoever is contained in the word of God is true: but it is certain and evident, that these books in particular are the word of God: therefore it is certain and evident, that whatsoever is contained in these books is true. Which conclusion I take for a major in a certain argument, and say thus: it is certain and evident, that whatsoever is contained in these books is true: but it is certain and evident, that such particular articles (for example, the Trinity, incarnation, original sin, &c.) are contained in these books: therefore it is certain and evident, that these particular objects are true. Neither will it avail you to say, that the said principles are not evident by natural discourse, but only to the eye of reason, cleared by grace, as you speak. For supernatural evidence, no less (yea, rather more) drowns and excludes obscurity, than natural evidence doth; neither can the party so enlightened be said voluntarily to captivate his understanding to that light, but rather his understanding is by a necessity made captive, and forced not to disbelieve what is presented by so clear a light: and, therefore, your imaginary faith is not the true faith, defined by the apostle, but an invention of your own.

32. " That the faith of protestants wanted the third condition, which was *prudence*, is deduced from all that hitherto hath been said. What wisdom was it, to forsake a church confessedly very ancient, and besides which there could be demonstrated no other visible church of Christ upon earth? A church acknowledged to want nothing necessary to salvation; endued with succession of bishops, with visibility and universality of time

and place: a church, which, if it be not the true church, her enemies cannot pretend to have any church, ordination, Scripture, succession, &c. and are forced, for their own sake, to maintain her perpetual existence and being. To leave, I say, such a church, and frame a community, without either unity, or means to procure it: a church, which, at Luther's first revolt, had no larger extent than where his body was: a church without universality of time or place: a church, which can pretend no visibility or being, except only in that former church, which it opposeth: a church void of succession of persons or doctrine. What wisdom was it to follow such men as Luther, in an opposition against the visible church of Christ, begun upon mere passion? What wisdom is it to receive from us a church, ordination, Scriptures, personal succession, and not succession of doctrine? Is not this to verify the name of heresy, which signifieth election or choice? Whereby they cannot avoid that note of imprudency, or (as St. Augustine calls it) foolishness, set down by him against the Manichees, and by me recited before. 'I would not (saith he) believe * the gospel, unless the authority of the church did move me. Those therefore whom I obeyed, saying, Believe the gospel, why should I not obey the same men saying unto me, Do not believe Manichæus (Luther, Calvin, &c.)? Choose what thou pleasest: if thou say, Believe the catholics, they warn me not to believe thee: wherefore if I believe them, I cannot believe thee. If thou say, Do not believe the catholics, thou shalt not do well, in forc-

* Cont. ep. Fund. c. v.

ing me to the faith of Manichæus, because, by the preaching of catholics I believed the gospel itself. If thou say, You did well to believe them, (catholics) commending the gospel; but you did not well to believe them, discommending Manichæus; dost thou think me so very foolish, that, without any reason at all, I should believe what thou wilt, and not believe what thou wilt not?' Nay, this holy father is not content to call it foolishness, but mere madness, in these words: 'Why should I not most diligently inquire * what Christ commanded, of those before all others, by whose authority I was moved to believe, that Christ commanded any good thing? Canst thou better declare to me what he said, whom I would not have thought to have been, or to be, if the belief thereof had been recommended by thee to me? This, therefore, I believed by fame, strengthened by celebrity, consent, antiquity. But every one may see, that you, so few, so turbulent, so new, can produce nothing which deserves authority. What *madness* is this? Believe them, (catholics) that we ought to believe Christ; but learn of us what Christ said. Why, I beseech thee? Surely if they (catholics) were not at all, and could not teach me any thing, I would more easily persuade myself, that I were not to believe Christ, than I should learn any thing concerning him from any other than those by whom I believed him.' Lastly, I ask, what wisdom it could be to leave all visible churches, and consequently the true catholic church of Christ, which you confess cannot err in points necessary to salvation, and the Ro-

* Lib. de util. Cred. c. xiv.

man church, which you grant doth not err in fundamentals, and follow private men, who may err even in points necessary to salvation? Especially, if we add, that when Luther rose, there was no visible true catholic church besides that of Rome, and them who agreed with her; in which sense she was and is the only true church of Christ, and not capable of any error in faith. Nay, even Luther, who first opposed the Roman church, yet, coming to dispute against other heretics, he is forced to give the lie both to his own words and deeds, in saying, 'We freely confess,* that in the papacy there are many good things worthy the name of Christian, which have come from them to us: namely, we confess that in the papacy there is true Scripture, true baptism, the true sacrament of the altar, the true keys for the remission of sins, the true office of preaching, true catechism, as our Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, Articles of Faith,' &c. And afterward, 'I vouch, that under the papacy there is true Christianity, yea, the kernel and marrow of Christianity, and many pious and great saints.' And again he affirmeth, that 'the church of Rome hath the true Spirit, gospels, faith, baptism, sacraments, the keys, the office of preaching, prayer, Holy Scripture, and whatsoever Christianity ought to have.' And a little before, 'I hear and see, that they bring in anabaptism only to this end, that they might spite the pope, as men that will receive nothing from antichrist, no otherwise than the sacramentaries do, who therefore believe only

* In epist. cont. Anab. ad duos Parochos, to 2. Germ. Wit. fol. 229, 230.

and fury, as Dr. Potter is very free in this kind; I desire every one to ponder the words of St. Chrysostome, who teacheth, that every least error overthrows all faith, and whosoever is guilty thereof, is, in the church, like one who in the commonwealth forgeth false coin. 'Let them hear (saith the holy father) what St. Paul saith; namely, That they who brought in some small error * had overthrown the gospel: for, to shew how a small thing ill mingled doth corrupt the whole, he said, that the gospel was subverted. For as he who clips a little of the stamp from the King's money, makes the whole piece of no value; so, whosoever takes away the least particle of sound faith, is wholly corrupted, always going from that beginning to worse things. Where then are they who condemn us as contentious persons, because we cannot agree with heretics; and do often say, that there is no difference betwixt us and them, but that our disagreement proceeds from ambition to domineer?' And thus having shewed, that protestants want true faith, it remaineth that, according to my first design, I examine whether they do not also want charity, as it respects a man's self."

* Gal. i. 7.

ANSWER TO THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

That protestants are not heretics.

Ad §. 1. He that will accuse any one man, much more any great multitude of men, of any great and horrible crime, should in all reason and justice take care, that the greatness of his evidence do equal, if not exceed, the quality of the crime. And such an accusation you would here make shew of, by pretending first, To lay such grounds of it, as are "either already proved, or else yielded on all sides;" and after to raise a firm and stable structure of convincing arguments upon them. But both these I find to be mere and vain pretences; and, having considered this chapter also without prejudice or passion, as I did the former, I am enforced, by the light of truth, to pronounce your whole discourse a painted and ruinous building, upon a weak and sandy foundation.

2. Ad §. 2, 3. First, for your grounds: A great part of them is falsely said to be either proved or granted. It is true, indeed, that man, by his natural wit or industry, could never have attained to the knowledge of God's will to give him a supernatural and eternal happiness; nor of the means, by which his pleasure was to bestow this happiness upon him. And, therefore, your first ground is good, that "it was requisite his understanding should be enabled to apprehend that end

and means, by a knowledge supernatural." I say, this is good, if you mean by *knowledge* an apprehension or belief. But if you take the word properly and exactly, it is both false; for faith is not knowledge, no more than three is four, but eminently contained in it, so that he that knows believes, and something more; but he that believes, many times does not know, nay, if he doth barely and merely believe, he doth never know; and, besides, it is retracted by yourself presently, where you require, that the object of faith must be both naturally and supernaturally unknown. And, again, in the next page, where you say—Faith differs from science in regard of the object's obscurity. For that science and knowledge, properly taken, are synonymous terms, and that a knowledge of the thing absolutely unknown is a plain implicancy, I think are things so plain, that you will not require any proof of them.

3. But then, whereas you add, that " if such a knowledge were no more than probable, it could not be able sufficiently to overbear our will, and encounter with human probabilities, being backed with the strength of flesh and blood;" and, therefore, conclude, that " it was farther necessary, that this supernatural knowledge should be most certain and infallible:"—to this I answer, That I do heartily acknowledge and believe the articles of our faith to be in themselves truths, as certain and infallible as the very common principles of geometry and metaphysics. But that there is required of us a knowledge of them, and adherence to them, as certain as that of sense or science; that such a certainty is required of us under pain of damnation, so that no man can hope to be in a

state of salvation, but he that finds in himself such a degree of faith, such a strength of adherence; this I have already demonstrated to be a great error, and of dangerous and pernicious consequence. And because I am more and more confirmed in my persuasion, that the truth which I there delivered, is of great and singular use, I will here confirm it with more reasons. And to satisfy you, that this is no singularity of my own, my margent presents you with a protestant divine* of great authority, and no way singular in his opinions, who hath long since preached and justified the same doctrine.

4. I say, that every text of Scripture which makes mention of any that were weak, or any that were strong, in faith; of any that were of little, or any that were of great faith; of any that abounded, or any that were rich in faith; of increasing, growing, rooting, grounding, establish-

* Mr. Hooker, in his Answer to Travers's Supplication:—I have taught, that the assurance of things which we believe by the word, is not so certain as of that we perceive by sense. And

ing, confirming in faith; every such text is a demonstrative refutation of this vain fancy, proving that faith, even true and saving faith, is not a thing consisting in such an indivisible point of perfection as you make it, but capable of augmentation and diminution. Every prayer you make to God to increase your faith, or (if you conceive such a prayer derogatory from the perfection of your faith) the apostles' praying to Christ to increase their faith, is a convincing argument of the same conclusion. Moreover, if this doctrine of yours were true, then, seeing not any the least doubting can consist with a most infallible certainty, it will follow, that every least doubting in any matter of faith, though resisted and involuntary, is a damnable sin, absolutely destructive, so long as it lasts, of all true and saving faith; which you are so far from granting, that you make it no sin at all, but only an occasion of merit: and if you should esteem it a sin, then must you acknowledge, contrary to your own principles, that there are actual sins merely involuntary. The same is furthermore invincibly confirmed by every deliberate sin that any Christian commits, by any progress in charity that he makes. For seeing, as St. John assures us, our faith is "the victory which overcomes the world," certainly if the faith of all true believers were perfect (and, if true faith be capable of no imperfection, if all faith be a knowledge most certain and infallible, all faith must be perfect; for the most imperfect that is, according to your doctrine, if it be true, must be most certain; and sure the most perfect that is, cannot be more than most certain), then certainly their victory over the world, and therefore over

the flesh, and therefore over sin, must of necessity be perfect, and so it should be impossible for any true believer to commit any deliberate sin; and therefore he that commits any sin must not think himself a true believer. Besides, seeing faith worketh by charity, and charity is the effect of faith; certainly, if the cause were perfect, the effect would be perfect; and, consequently, as you make no degrees in faith, so there would be none in charity, and so no man could possibly make any progress in it, but all true believers should be equal in charity, as in faith you make them equal; and from thence it would follow unavoidably, that whosoever finds in himself any true faith, must presently persuade himself, that he is perfect in charity; and whosoever, on the other side, discovers in his charity any imperfection, must not believe that he hath any true faith. These, you see, are strange and portentous consequences; and yet the deduction of them from your doctrine is clear and apparent; which shews this doctrine of yours, which you would fain have true, that there might be some necessity of your church's infallibility, to be indeed plainly repugnant not only to truth, but even to all religion and piety, and fit for nothing, but to make men negligent of making any progress in faith or charity. And, therefore, I must intreat and adjure you either to discover unto me (which I take God to witness I cannot perceive) some fallacy in my reasons against it, or never hereafter to open your mouth in defence of it.

5. As for that one single reason which you produce to confirm it, it will appear upon examination to be resolved finally into a groundless asser-

tion of your own, contrary to all truth and experience, and that is, that no degree of faith, less than a most certain and infallible knowledge, can be " able sufficiently to overbear our will, and encounter with human probabilities, being backed with the strength of flesh and blood." For who sees not that many millions in the world forego many times their present ease and pleasure, undergo great and toilsome labours, encounter great difficulties, adventure upon great dangers, and all this not upon any certain expectation, but upon a probable hope of some future gain and commodity, and that not infinite and eternal, but finite and temporal? Who sees not that many men abstain from many things they exceedingly desire, not upon any certain assurance, but a probable fear, of danger that may come after? What man ever was there so madly in love with a present penny, but that he would willingly spend it upon any little hope, that by doing so he might gain a hundred thousand pounds? And I would fain know, what gay probabilities you could devise to dissuade him from this resolution. And, if you can devise none, what reason then or sense is there, but that a probable hope of infinite and eternal happiness, provided for all those that obey Christ Jesus, and much more a firm faith, though not so certain, in some sort, as sense or science, may be able to sway our will to obedience, and encounter with all those temptations which flesh and blood can suggest to avert us from it? Men may talk their pleasure of an absolute and most infallible certainty, but did they generally believe that obedience to Christ were the only way to

present and eternal felicity, but as firmly and undoubtedly as that there is such a city as Constantinople, nay, but as much as Cæsar's Commentaries, or the History of Sallust; I believe the lives of most men, both papists and protestants, would be better than they are. Thus, therefore, out of your own words I argue against you:—he that requires to true faith an absolute and infallible certainty, for this only reason—because any less degree could not be able to overbear our will, &c.—imports, that if a less degree of faith were able to do this, then a less degree of faith may be true, and Divine, and saving faith: but experience shews, and reason confirms, that a firm faith, though not so certain as sense or science, may be able to encounter and overcome our will and affections; and therefore it follows, from your own reason, that faith, which is not a most certain and infallible knowledge, may be true, and Divine, and saving faith.

6. All these reasons I have employed to shew, that such a most certain and infallible faith, as here you talk of, is not so necessary, but that, without such a high degree of it, it is possible to please God. And, therefore, the doctrines delivered by you, §. 25. are most presumptuous and uncharitable, viz. That such a most certain and infallible faith is necessary to salvation, *Necessitate finis* or *medii;* so necessary, that after a man is come to the use of reason, no man ever was or can be saved without it. Wherein you boldly intrude into the judgment-seat of God, and damn men for breaking laws, not of God's but your own making. But withal you clearly contradict your-

self, not only * where you affirm, that your faith depends finally upon the tradition of age to age, of father to son, which cannot be a fit ground, but only for a moral assurance; nor only where you pretend, † that not alone hearing and seeing, but also histories, letters, relations of many (which certainly are things not certain and infallible), are yet foundations good enough to support your faith: which doctrine, if it were good and allowable, protestants might then hope, that their histories, and letters, and relations, might also pass for means sufficient of a sufficient certainty, and that they should not be excluded from salvation for want of such a certainty. But indeed the pressure of the present difficulty compelled you to speak here, what I believe you will not justify, and with a pretty tergiversation to shew Dr. Potter your means of moral certainty; whereas the objection was, that you had no means or possibility of infallible certainty, for which you are plainly at as great a loss, and as far to seek as any of your adversaries. And, therefore, it concerns you highly not to damn others for want of it, lest you involve yourselves in the same condemnation; according to those terrible words of St. Paul, "thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for, wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost the same things," &c. In this, therefore, you plainly contradict yourself. And lastly, most plainly, in saying as you do here, you contradict and retract your pretence of charity to protestants in the beginning of your book: for there you

* P. 1. c. ii. §. 14. † P. 2. c. v. §. 32.

make profession, that you have no assurance, but that "protestants, dying protestants, may possibly die with contrition, and be saved:" and here you are very peremptory, that "they cannot but want a means absolutely necessary to salvation, and, wanting that, cannot but be damned."

7. The third condition you require to faith is, that our assent to Divine truths "should not only be unknown and unevident by any human discourse," but that "absolutely also it should be obscure in itself, and, ordinarily speaking, be void even of supernatural evidence." Which words must have a very favourable construction, or else they will not be sense. For who can make any thing of these words taken properly, that "faith must be an unknown unevident assent, or an assent absolutely obscure?" I had always thought, that known and unknown, obscure and evident, had been affections not of our assent, but the object of it, not of our belief, but the thing believed. For well may we assent to a thing unknown, obscure, or unevident; but that our assent itself should be called therefore unknown or obscure, seems to me as great an impropriety, as if I should say, your sight were green or blue, because you see something that is so. In other places, therefore, I answer your words, but here I must answer your meaning: which I conceive to be, that it is necessary to faith, that the objects of it, the points which we believe, should not be so evidently certain, as to necessitate our understanding to an assent, that so there might be some merit in faith, as you love to speak (who will not receive, no not from God himself, but a pennyworth for a penny), but as we, some obedience in it, which

can hardly have place where there is no possibility of disobedience; as there is not, where the understanding does all, and the will nothing. Now seeing the religion of protestants, though it be much more credible than yours, yet is not pretended to have the absolute evidence of sense or demonstration; therefore I might let this doctrine pass without exception, for any prejudice that can redound to us by it. But yet I must not forbear to tell you, that your discourse proves, indeed, this condition requisite to the merit, but yet not to the essence of faith: without it faith were not an act of obedience, but yet faith may be faith without it; and this you must confess, unless you will say either the apostles believed not the whole gospel which they preached, or that they were not eye-witnesses of a great part of it, unless you will question St. John for saying, "that which we have seen with our eyes, and with our hands have handled, &c. declare we unto you:" nay, our Saviour himself for saying, "Thomas, because thou seest thou believest; blessed are they which have not seen, and yet have believed." Yet if you will say, that in respect of the things which they saw, the apostles' assent was not pure, and proper, and mere faith, but somewhat more, an assent containing faith, but superadding to it, I will not contend with you; for it will be a contention about words. But then, again, I must crave leave to tell you, that the requiring this condition is, in my judgment, a plain revocation of the former: for had you made the matter of faith either naturally or supernaturally evident, it might have been a fitly attempered and duly proportioned object for an absolute certainty natural or super-

natural: but requiring as you do—that faith should be an absolute knowledge of a thing not absolutely known, an infallible certainty of a thing, which though it is in itself, yet is it not made appear to us to be, infallibly certain—to my understanding you speak impossibilities. And truly for one of your religion to do so, is but a good decorum: for the matter and object of your faith being so full of contradictions, a contradictious faith may very well become a contradictious religion. Your faith, therefore, if you please to have it so, let it be a free necessitated, certain uncertain, evident obscure, prudent and foolish, natural and supernatural unnatural assent. But they which are unwilling to believe nonsense themselves, or persuade others to do so, it is but reason they should make the faith, wherewith they believe, an intelligible, compossible, consistent thing, and not define it by repugnances. Now nothing is more repugnant, than that a man should be required to give most certain credit unto that which cannot be made appear most cer-

of the means by which it is wrought. As nothing by water can be made more cold than water, nor by fire more hot than fire, nor by honey more sweet than honey, nor by gall more bitter than gall: or if you will suppose it infused without means, then that power which infuseth into the understanding assent, which bears analogy to sight in the eye, must also infuse evidence, that is, visibility into the object: and look what degree of assent is infused into the understanding, at least the same degree of evidence must be infused into the object. And for you to require a strength of credit, beyond the appearance of the object's credibility, is all one as if you should require me to go ten miles an hour upon a horse, that will go but five; to discern a man certainly through a mist or cloud, that makes him not certainly discernible; to hear a sound more clearly than it is audible; to understand a thing more fully than it is intelligible: and he that doth so, I may well expect that his next injunction will be, that I must see something that is invisible, hear something inaudible, understand something that is wholly unintelligible. For he that demands ten of me, knowing I have but five, does in effect as if he demanded five, knowing that I have none: and, by like reason, you requiring that I should see things farther than they are visible, require I should see something invisible; and in requiring that I believe something more firmly than it is made to me evidently credible, you require, in effect, that I believe something which appears to me incredible, and while it does so. I deny not but that I am bound to believe the truth of many texts of Scripture, the sense whereof is to me obscure;

and the truth of many articles of faith, the manner whereof is obscure, and to human understandings incomprehensible: but then it is to be observed, that not the sense of such texts, nor the manner of these things, is that which I am bound to believe, but the truth of them. But that I should believe the truth of any thing, the truth whereof cannot be made evident with an evidence proportionable to the degree of faith required of me; this, I say, for any man to be bound to, is unjust and unreasonable, because to do it is impossible.

8. Ad §. 4—12. Yet though I deny that it is required of us to be certain in the highest degree, infallibly certain of the truth of the things which we believe, for this were to know, and not believe, neither is it possible, unless our evidence of it, be it natural or supernatural, were of the highest degree; yet I deny not, but we ought to be, and may be, infallibly certain that we are to believe the religion of Christ. For, First, This is most certain, that we are in all things to do according to wisdom and reason, rather than against it. Secondly, This is as certain, that wisdom and reason require, that we should believe these things, which are by many degrees more credible and probable than the contrary. Thirdly, This is as certain, that to every man, who considers impartially what great things may be said for the truth of Christianity, and what poor things they are which may be said against it, either for any other religion, or for none at all, it cannot but appear by many degrees more credible, that the Christian religion is true, than the contrary. And, from all these premises, this conclusion evidently follows, that it is infallibly certain, that we

are firmly to believe the truth of the Christian religion.

9. Your discourse therefore touching the fourth requisite to faith, which is prudence, I admit, so far as to grant, 1. That if we were required to believe with certainty (I mean a moral certainty) things no way represented as infallible and certain, (I mean morally) an unreasonable obedience were required of us. And so likewise were it, were we required to believe as absolutely certain, that which is no way represented to us absolutely certain. 2. That whom God obligeth to believe any thing, he will not fail to furnish their understandings with such inducements, as are sufficient (if they be not negligent or perverse) to persuade them to believe. 3. That there is an abundance of arguments exceedingly credible, inducing men to believe the truth of Christianity; I say so credible, that though they cannot make us evidently see what we believe; yet they evidently convince, that in true wisdom and prudence the articles of it deserve credit, and ought to be accepted as things revealed by God. 4. That without such reasons and inducements, our choice even of the true faith is not to be commended as prudent, but to be condemned of rashness and levity.

10. But then for your making prudence not only a commendation of a believer, and a justification of his faith, but also essential to it, and part of the definition of it, in that questionless you were mistaken, and have done as if being to say what a man is, you should define him, a reasonable creature that hath skill in astronomy. For as all astronomers are men, but all men are not astronomers, and therefore astronomy ought not

to be put into the definition of man, where nothing should have place, but what agrees to all men: so though all that are truly wise, (that is, wise for eternity) will believe aright, yet many may believe aright, which are not wise. I could wish with all my heart, as Moses did—that all the Lord's people could prophecy—that all that believe the true religion were "able (according to St. Peter's injunction) to give a reason of the hope that is in them," a reason why they hope for eternal happiness by this way rather than any other! Neither do I think it any great difficulty, that men of ordinary capacities, if they would give their mind to it, might quickly be enabled to do it. But should I affirm, that all true believers can do so, I suppose it would be as much against experience and modesty, as it is against truth and charity, to say as you do—that they which cannot do so, either are not at all, or to no purpose, true believers. And thus we see, that the foundations you build upon are ruinous and deceitful, and so unfit to support your fabric, that they destroy one another. I come now to shew that your arguments to prove protestants heretics are all of the same quality with your former grounds; which I will do, by opposing clear and satisfying answers in order to them.

11. Ad §. 13. To the First, then, delivered by you, § 13. That protestants must be heretics, because they opposed divers truths propounded for Divine by the visible church; I answer, it is not heresy to oppose any truth propounded by the church, but only such a truth as is an essential part of the gospel of Christ. 2. The doctrines, which protestants opposed, were not truths, but plain and impious falsehoods. Neither, Thirdly, Were they

propounded as truths by the visible church, but only by a part of it, and that a corrupted part.

12. Ad §. 14. The next argument, in the next particle, tells us, that every error against any doctrine revealed by God is damnable heresy: now either protestants or the Roman church must err against the word of God: but the Roman church we grant (perforce) doth not err damnably, neither can she, because she is the catholic church, which we (you say) confess cannot err damnably: therefore protestants must err against God's word, and consequently are guilty of formal heresy, Whereunto I answer, plainly, that there be in this argument almost as many falsehoods as assertions. For neither is every error against any doctrine revealed by God a damnable heresy, unless it be revealed publicly and plainly, with a command that all should believe it. 2. Dr. Potter no where grants, that the errors of the Roman church are not in themselves damnable, though he hopes by accident they may not actually damn some men amongst you; and this you yourself confess in divers places of your book, where you tell us, that he allows no hope of salvation to those amongst you, whom ignorance cannot excuse.* 3. You beg the question twice in taking for granted, First, That the Roman church is the truly catholic church; which without much favour can hardly pass for a part of it: and again, that the catholic church cannot fall into any error of itself damnable; for it may do so, and still be the catholic church, if it retain those truths which may be an antidote against the malignity of this error, to

* Ch. v. §. 41.

those that held it out of a simple unaffected ignorance. Lastly, Though the thing be true, yet I might well require some proof of it from you, that either protestants or the Roman church must err against God's word. For if their contradiction be your only reason, then also you or the Dominicans must be heretics, because you contradict one another as much as protestants and papists.

13. Ad §. 15. The third argument pretends, that you have shewed already, that the visible church is judge of controversies, and therefore infallible; from whence you suppose it follows, that to oppose her is to oppose God. To which I answer, That you have said only, and not shewed, that the visible church is judge of controversies. And, indeed, how can she be judge of them, if she cannot decide them? And how can she decide them, if it be a question, whether she be judge of them? That which is questioned itself, cannot with any sense be pretended to be fit to decide other questions; and much less this question, whether it have authority to judge and decide all questions? 2. If she were judge, it would not follow that she were infallible; for we have many judges in our courts of judicature, yet none infallible. Nay, you cannot with any modesty deny, that every man in the world ought to judge for himself what religion is truest; and yet you will not say that every man is infallible. 3. If the church were supposed infallible, yet it would not follow at all, much less manifestly, that to oppose her declaration is to oppose God; unless you suppose also, that she is infallible, so by her opposers she is known or believed to be so. Lastly, If all this were true (as it is all most false), yet

were it to little purpose, seeing you have omitted to prove that the visible church is the Roman.

14. Ad §. 16. Instead of a fourth argument, this is presented to us—that if Luther were a heretic, then they that agreed with him must be so. And that Luther was a formal heretic, you endeavour to prove by this most formal syllogism—To say the visible church is not universal, is properly a heresy: but Luther's reformation was not universal; therefore it cannot be excused from formal heresy.—Whereunto I answer, First, To the first part, that it is no way impossible, that Luther, had he been the inventor and first broacher of a false doctrine, (as he was not) might have been a formal heretic, and yet that those who follow him may be only so materially and improperly, and indeed no heretics. Your own men out of St. Augustine distinguish between *hæretici, et hæreticorum sequaces:* and you yourself, though you pronounce the leaders among the Arians formal heretics, yet confess, that Salvian was at least doubtful, whether these Arians, who in simplicity followed their teachers, might not be excused by ignorance. And about this suspension of his you also seem suspended; for you neither approve nor condemn it. Secondly, To the second part, I say, that had you not presumed upon your ignorance in logic, as well as metaphysic and school divinity, you would never have obtruded upon us this rope of sand for a formal syllogism. It is even cousin-german to this:—To deny the resurrection, is properly a heresy: but Luther's reformation was not universal; therefore it cannot be excused from formal heresy. Or to this—To say the visible church is not universal, is properly a heresy: but the preaching

of the gospel at the beginning was not universal; therefore it cannot be excused from formal heresy. For as he, whose reformation is but particular, may yet not deny the resurrection, so may he also not deny the church's universality. And as the apostles, who preached the gospel in the beginning, did believe the church universal, though their preaching at the beginning was not so: so Luther also might and did believe the church universal, though his reformation were but particular. I say, he did believe it universal, even in your own sense, that is, universal *de jure*, though not *de facto*. And as for universality in fact, he believed the church much more universal than his reformation: for he did conceive (as appears by your own allegations out of him), that not only the part reformed was the true church, but also that they were part of it, who needed reformation. Neither did he ever pretend to make a new church, but to reform the old one. Thirdly, and lastly, To the first proposition of this unsyllogistical syllogism, I answer, that to say the true church is not always *de facto* universal, is so far from being a heresy, that it is a certain truth known to all those that know the world, and what religions possess far the greater part of it. Donatus therefore was not to blame for saying, that the church might possibly be confined to Afric; but for saying, without ground, that then it was so. And St. Augustine, as he was in the right in thinking that the church was then extended farther than Afric; so was he in the wrong, if he thought of necessity it always must be so; but most palpably mistaken in conceiving that it was then spread over the whole earth, and known to all nations, which, if passion did not trouble you,

and make you forget how lately almost half the world was discovered, and in what estate it was then found, you would very easily see and confess.

15. Ad §. 17. In the next section you pretend, that you have no desire to prosecute the similitude of protestants with the Donatists; and yet you do it with as much spite and malice as could well be devised, but in vain: for Lucilla might do ill in promoting the sect of the Donatists, and yet the mother and the daughter, whom you glance at, might do well in ministering influence (as you phrase it) to protestants in England. Unless you will conclude, because one woman did one thing ill, therefore no woman can do any thing well; or because it was ill done to promote one sect, therefore it must be ill done to maintain any.

16. The Donatists might do ill in calling the chair of Rome the Chair of Pestilence, and the Roman church a harlot; and yet the state of the church being altered, protestants might do well to do so: and therefore, though St. Augustine might perhaps have reason to persecute the Donatists for detracting from the church, and calling her harlot, when she was not so; yet you may have none to threaten Dr. Potter that you would persecute him (as the application of this place intimates you would), if it were in your power; plainly shewing that you are a cursed cow, though your horns be short, seeing the Roman church is not now what it was in St. Augustine's time. And hereof the conclusion of your own book affords us a very pregnant testimony; where you tell us out of St. Augustine, that one grand impediment, which among many kept the seduced followers of the faction of Donatus from the church's commu-

nion, was a calumny raised against the catholics, that they did set some strange thing upon their altar. "To how many (saith St. Augustine) did the report of ill tongues shut up the way to enter, who said, that we put I know not what upon the altar?" Out of destestation of the calumny, and just indignation against it, he would not so much as name the impiety wherewith they were charged; and therefore, by a rhetorical figure, calls it I know not what. But compare with him Optatus, writing of the same matter, and you shall plainly perceive that this (I know not what) pretended to be set upon the altar, was indeed a picture, which the Donatists (knowing how detestable a thing it was to all Christians at that time, to set up any pictures in a church to worship them, as your new fashion is), bruited abroad to be done in the churches of the catholic church. But what answer do St. Augustine and Optatus make to this accusation? Do they confess and maintain it? Do they say, as you would now, It is true, we do set pictures upon our altar, and that not only for ornament or memory, but for worship also; but we do well to do so, and this ought not to trouble you, or affright you from our communion? What other answer your church could now make to such an objection, is very hard to imagine: and therefore were your doctrine the same with the doctrine of the fathers in this point, they must have answered so likewise. But they to the contrary not only deny the crime, but also abhor and detest it. To little purpose, therefore, do you hunt after these poor shadows of resemblances between us and the Donatists, unless you could shew an exact resemblance between the present church of

Rome and the ancient: which seeing, by this and many other particulars, it is demonstrated to be impossible, that church, which was then a virgin, may be now a harlot, and that which was detraction in the Donatists, may be in protestants a just accusation.

17. As ill success have you in comparing Dr. Potter with Tyconius, whom as St. Augustine finds fault with for continuing in the Donatists' separation, having forsaken the ground of it, the doctrine of the church's perishing; so you condemn the Doctor for continuing in their communion, who hold (as you say) the very same heresy. But if this were indeed the doctrine of the Donatists, how is it that you say presently after, that the protestants, who hold the church of Christ perished, were worse than the Donatists, who said that the church remained at least in Africa? These things, methinks, hang not well together. But to let this pass: the truth is, this difference, for which you would fain raise such a horrible dissension between Dr. Potter and his brethren, if it be well considered, is only in words and the manner of expression; they affirming only, that the church perished from its own integrity, and fell into many corruptions, which he denies not; and the Doctor denying only that it fell from its essence, and became no church at all, which they affirm not.

18. These, therefore, are but velitations, and you would seem to make but small account of them. But the main point, you say, is—that "since Luther's reformed church was not in being for divers centuries before Luther, and yet was in the apostles' time, they must of necessity affirm heretically with the Donatists, that the true un-

spotted church of Christ perished, and that she, which remained on earth, was (O blasphemy!) a harlot." By which words it seems you are resolute perpetually to confound *true* and *unspotted;* and to put no difference between a corrupted church, and none at all. But what is this, but to make no difference between a diseased and a dead man? Nay, what is it but to contradict yourselves, who cannot deny but that sins are as great stains, and spots, and deformities, in the sight of God, as errors; and confess your church to be a congregation of men, whereof every particular, not one excepted (and consequently the generality, which is nothing but a collection of them), is polluted and defiled with sin? You proceed,

19. But say, "The same heresy follows out of Dr. Potter and other protestants, that the church may err in points not fundamental; because we have shewed, that every error against any revealed truth is heresy and damnable, whether the matter be great or small: and how can the church more truly be said to perish, than when she is permitted to maintain damnable heresy? Besides, we will hereafter prove, that by every act of heresy all Divine faith is lost, and to maintain a true church without any faith, is to fancy a living man without life." *Ans.* What you have said before, hath been answered before; and what you shall say hereafter, shall be confuted hereafter. But if it be such a certain ground, that every error against any one revealed truth is a damnable heresy, then, I hope, I shall have your leave to subsume, that the Dominicans in your account must hold a damnable heresy, who hold an error against the immaculate conception: which you must

needs esteem a revealed truth, or, otherwise, why are you so urgent and importunate to have it defined, seeing your rule is, Nothing may be defined unless it be first revealed? But, without your leave, I will make bold to conclude, that, if either that or the contrary assertion be a revealed truth, you or they, choose you whether, must without contradiction hold a damnable heresy; if this ground be true, that every contradiction of a revealed truth is such. And now I dare say, for fear of inconvenience, you will begin to temper the crudeness of your former assertion, and tell us, that neither of you are heretics, because the truth, against which you err, though revealed, is not sufficiently propounded. And so say I, neither is your doctrine, which protestants contradict, sufficiently propounded. For though it be plain enough, that your church proposeth it, yet still, methinks, it is as plain, that your church's proposition is not sufficient; and I desire you would not say, but prove the contrary. Lastly, to your question—How can the church more truly be said to perish, than when she is permitted to maintain a damnable heresy?—I answer, She may be more truly said to perish, when she is not only permitted to do so, but *de facto* doth maintain a damnable heresy. Again, She may be more truly said to perish, when she falls into a heresy, which is not only damnable in itself, and *ex natura rei*, as you speak, but such a heresy, the belief of whose contrary truth is necessary, not only *necessitate præcepti*, but *medii*, and therefore the heresy so absolutely and indispensably destructive of salvation, that no ignorance can excuse it, nor any general repentance, without a dereliction of it, can beg a pardon for it. Such a heresy, if the

church should fall into, it might be more truly said to perish, than if it fell only into some heresy of its own nature damnable. For, in that state, all the members of it without exception, all without mercy, must needs perish for ever: in this, although those that might see the truth, and would not, cannot upon any good ground hope for salvation, yet without question it might send many souls to heaven, who would gladly have embraced the truth, but that they wanted means to discover it. Thirdly and lastly, She may yet be more truly said to perish, when she apostates from Christ absolutely, or rejects even those truths, out of which her heresies may be reformed; as if she should directly deny Jesus to be the Christ, or the Scripture to be the word of God. Towards which state of perdition it may well be feared, that the church of Rome doth somewhat incline, by her superinducing upon the rest of her errors the doctrine of her own infallibility, whereby her errors are made incurable: and by her pretending the Scripture is to be interpreted according to her doctrine, and not her doctrine to be judged of by Scripture, whereby she makes the Scripture ineffectual for her reformation.

20. Ad §. 18. I was very glad when I heard you say—The Holy Scripture, and ancient fathers, do assign separation from the visible church as a mark of heresy:—for I was in good hope, that no Christian would so belie the Scripture, as to say so of it, unless he could have produced some one text, at least, wherein this was plainly affirmed, or from whence it might be undoubtedly and undeniably collected. For assure yourself, good Sir, it is a very heinous crime to say, Thus saith the Lord, when the Lord doth not say so. I expect-

ed therefore some Scripture should have been alleged, wherein it should have been said, Whosoever separates from the Roman church is an heretic: or, The Roman church is infallible, or the guide of faith: or, at least, There shall be always some visible church infallible in matters of faith. Some such direction as this I hoped for: and I pray consider, whether I had not reason. The evangelists and apostles, who wrote the New Testament, we all suppose were good men, and very desirous to direct us the surest and plainest way to heaven; we suppose them likewise very sufficiently instructed by the Spirit of God in all the necessary points of the Christian faith, and therefore certainly not ignorant of this *unum necessarium*, this most necessary point of all others, without which, as you pretend and teach, all faith is no faith; that is, that the church of Rome was designed by God the guide of faith. We suppose them, lastly, wise men, especially being assisted by the Spirit of Wisdom, and such as knew, that a doubtful and questionable guide was for men's direction as good as none at all. And, after all these propositions, which I presume no good Christian will call into question, is it possible, that any Christian heart can believe, that not one amongst them all should, *ad rei memoriam*, write this necessary doctrine plainly so much as once? Certainly, in all reason they had provided much better for the good of Christians, if they had wrote this, though they had written nothing else. Methinks the evangelists, undertaking to write the gospel of Christ, could not possibly have omitted, any one of them, this most necessary point of faith, had they known it necessary (St.

Luke, especially, who plainly professes, that his intent was to write all things necessary). Methinks St. Paul, writing to the Romans, could not but have congratulated this their privilege to them! Methinks, instead of saying, "Your faith is spoken of all the world over," (which you have no reason to be very proud of; for he says the very same thing to the Thessalonians) he could not have failed to have told them, once, at least, in plain terms, that their faith was the rule for all the world for ever. But then sure he would have forborn to put them in fear of an impossibility, as he doth in his eleventh chapter, that they also, nay, the whole church of the gentiles, if they did not look to their standing, might fall away to infidelity, as the Jews had done. Methinks, in all his other epistles, at least in some, at least in one of them, he could not have failed to have given the world this direction, had he known it to be a true one—That all men were to be guided by the church of Rome, and none to separate from it under pain of damnation. Methinks, writing so often of heretics and antichrist, he should have given the world this (as you pretend) only sure preservative from them. How was it possible, that St. Peter, writing two catholic epistles, mentioning his own departure, writing to preserve Christians in the faith, should in neither of them commend them to the guidance of his pretended successors, the bishops of Rome? How was it possible, that St. James and St. Jude, in their catholic epistles, should not give this catholic direction? Methinks, St. John, instead of saying, "He that believeth, that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God," (the force of which direction your glosses do quite enervate,

and make unavailable to discern who are the sons of God) should have said,—He that adheres to the doctrine of the Roman church, and lives according to it, he is a good Christian, and by this mark ye shall know him! What man, not quite out of his wits, if he consider, as he should, the pretended necessity of this doctrine, that without the belief hereof no man ordinarily can be saved, can possibly force himself to conceive, that all these good and holy men, so desirous of men's salvation, and so well assured of it (as it is pretended), should be so deeply and affectedly silent in it, and not one of them say it plainly so much as once, but leave it to be collected from uncertain principles, by many more uncertain consequences? Certainly, he that can judge so uncharitably of them, it is no marvel if he censure other inferior servants of Christ as atheists and hypocrites, and what he pleases. Plain places therefore I did and had reason to look for, when I heard you say—The Holy Scripture assigns separation from the visible church as a mark of heresy. But, instead hereof, what have you brought us but mere impertinences? St. John said of some who pretended to be Christians, and were not so, and therefore, when it was for their advantage, forsook their profession, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." Of some, who, before the decree of the council to the contrary, were persuaded, and accordingly taught, that the convert gentiles were to keep to the law of Moses, it is said in the Acts, "Some who went out from us." And again, St. Paul in the same book forewarns the Ephesians,

that " out of them should arise men speaking perverse things." And from these places, which it seems are the plainest you have, you collect— That separation from the visible church is assigned by Scripture as a mark of heresy. Which is certainly a strange and unheard-of strain of logic: unless you will say, that every text, wherein it is said, that somebody goes out from somebody, affords an argument for this purpose; for, the first place, there is no certainty that it speaks of heretics, but no Christians, of antichrists, of such as denied Jesus to be the Christ, See the place, and you shall confess as much. The second place, it is certain, you must not say it speaks of heretics; for it speaks only of some who believed and taught an error, while it was yet a question, and not evident; and therefore, according to your doctrine, no formal heresy. The third says, indeed, that, of the professors of Christianity, some shall arise that shall teach heresy; but not one of them all, that says or intimates, that whosoever separates from the visible church, in what state soever, is certainly a heretic. Heretics, I confess, do always do so; but they that do so are not always heretics; for, perhaps, the state of the church may make it necessary for them to do so; as rebels always disobey the command of their king, yet they which disobey a king's command (which perhaps may be unjust) are not presently rebels.

21. Your allegations out of Vincentius, Prosper, and Cyprian, are liable to these exceptions: 1. That they are the sayings of men not assisted by the Spirit of God, and whose authority yourselves will not submit to in all things. 2. That the first and last are merely impertinent, neither

of them affirming or intimating, that separation from the present visible church is a mark of heresy; and the former, speaking plainly of separation from universality, consent, and antiquity, which if you will presume without proof that we did, and you did not, you beg the question: for you know we pretend, that we separated only from that present church, which had separated from the doctrine of the ancients, and because she had done so, and so far forth as she had done so, and no farther. And, lastly, The latter part of Prosper's words cannot be generally true, according to your own grounds; for you say a man may be divided from the church upon mere schism, without any mixture of heresy; and a man may be justly excommunicated for many other sufficient causes besides heresy. Lastly, A man may be divided by an unjust excommunication, and be both before and after a very good catholic; and therefore, you cannot maintain it universally true —That he who is divided from the church is a heretic, and antichrist.

22. In the 19th section we have the authority of eight fathers urged to prove—that the separation from the church of Rome, as it is the see of St. Peter, (I conceive you mean, as it is that particular church) is the mark of heresy.—Which kind of argument I might well refuse to answer, unless you would first promise me, that whensoever I should produce as plain sentences of as great a number of fathers as ancient, for any doctrine whatsoever, that you will subscribe to it, though it fall out to be contrary to the doctrine of the Roman church. For I conceive nothing in the world more unequal or unreasonable, than

that you should press us with such authorities as these, and think yourselves at liberty from them; and that you should account them fathers when they are for you, and children when they are against you. Yet I would not you should interpret this, as if I had not great assurance, that it is not possible for you ever to gain this cause at the tribunal of the fathers; nay, not of the fathers, whose sentences are here alleged. Let us consider them in order, and I doubt not to make it appear, that far the greater part of them, nay, all of them that are any way considerable, fall short of your purpose.

23. St. Jerome, (you say) writing to Pope Damasus, saith, "I am in the communion of the chair of Peter," &c. But then, I pray, consider he saith it to Pope Damasus; and this will much weaken the authority, with them who know how great overtruths men usually write to one another in letters. Consider, again, that he says only, that he was then in communion with the chair of Peter; not that he always would, or of necessity must be so; for his resolution to the contrary is too evident out of that which he saith elsewhere, which shall be produced hereafter. He says, that the church at that present was built upon that rock; but not that only, nor that always. Nay, his judgment, as shall appear, is express to the contrary. And so likewise the rest of his expressions (if we mean to reconcile Jerome with Jerome) must be conceived, as intended by him of that bishop and see of Rome, at that present time, and in the present state, and in respect of that doctrine which he there treats of. For otherwise, had he conceived it necessary for him and all men

to conform their judgment, in matters of faith, to the judgment of the bishop and church of Rome, how came it to pass, that he chose rather to believe the Epistle to the Hebrews canonical, upon the authority of the eastern church, than to reject it from the canon, upon the authority of the Roman? How comes it to pass, that he dissented from the authority of that church, touching the canon of the Old Testament? For if you say, that the church then consented with St. Jerome, I fear you will lose your fort by maintaining your outworks; and, by avoiding this, run into a greater danger of being forced to confess the present Roman church opposite herein to the ancient. How was it possible, that he should ever believe, that Liberius, bishop of Rome, either was or could have been, wrought over by * the solicitation of Fortunatianus, bishop of Aquileia, and brought after two years banishment to subscribe heresy? Which act of Liberius though some fondly question, being so vain as to expect we should rather believe them that lived but yesterday, thirteen hundred years almost after the thing is said to be done, and speaking for themselves in their own cause, rather than the disinterested time-fellows or immediate successors of Liberius himself; yet, I hope, they will not proceed to such a degree of immodesty, as once to question, whether St. Jerome thought so. And if this cannot be denied, I demand then, if he had lived in Liberius's time, could he, or would he, have written so to Liberius as he does to Damasus? Would he have said to him—I am in the communion of the chair of Pe-

* Hieronym. de Script. Eccles. tit. Fortunatianus.

ter: I know that the church is built upon this rock: whosoever gathereth not with thee, scattereth?—Would he then have said, the Roman faith and the catholic were the same? Or, that the Roman faith received no delusions, no not from an angel? I suppose he could not have said so with any coherence to his own belief; and therefore conceive it undeniable, that what he said then to Damasus, he said it (though perhaps he strained too high) only of Damasus, and never conceived that his words would have been extended to all his predecessors and successors.

24. The same answer I make to the first place of St. Ambrose, *viz.* That no more can be certainly concluded from it, but that the catholic bishops and the Roman church were then at unity; so that whosoever agreed with the latter, could not then but agree with the former. But that this rule was perpetual, and that no man could ever agree with the catholic bishops, but he must agree with the Roman church; this he says not, nor gives you any ground to conclude from him. Athanasius, when he was excommunicated by Liberius, agreed very ill with the Roman church; and yet you will not gainsay but he agreed well enough with the catholic bishops. The second I am uncertain what the sense of it is, and what truth is in it; but most certain, that it makes nothing to your present purpose: for it neither affirms nor imports, that separation from the Roman church is a certain mark of heresy. For the rights of communion (whatsoever it signifies) might be said to flow from it, if that church were, by ecclesiastical law, the head of all other churches: but unless it were made so by Divine

authority, and that absolutely, separation from it could not be a mark of heresy.

25. For St. Cyprian, all the world knows, that he * resolutely opposed a decree of the Roman bishop, and all that adhered to him in the point of rebaptizing, which that church at that time delivered as a necessary tradition; so necessary, that by the Bishop of Rome, Firmilianus, and other bishops of Cappadocia, Cilicia, and Galatia, and generally all who persisted in the contrary opinion † were therefore deprived of the church's communion, (which excommunication could not but involve St. Cyprian, who defended the same opinion as resolutely as Firmilianus, though Cardinal Perron magisterially, and without all colour of proof, affirms the contrary) and Cyprian in particular so far cast off, as for it to be pronounced by Stephen, "a false Christ." Again, so necessary, that the bishops which were sent by Cyprian from Afric to Rome, were not admitted to the communion of ordinary conference: but all men, who were subject to the bishop of Rome's authority, were commanded by him not only to deny them the church's peace, and communion, but even lodging and entertainment; manifestly declaring, that they reckoned them among those whom St. John forbids to receive to house, or to say God speed to them. All these terrors, notwithstanding, St. Cyprian holds still his former opinion. And though, out of respect to the church's

* It is confessed by Baronius, Ann. 238. N. 41. By Bellarm. l. iv. de R. Pont. c. vii. Sect. Tertia ratio.

† Confessed by Baronius, Ann. 258. N. 14, 15. By Card. Perron's Rep. l. i. c. xxv. Ibid.

peace,* he judged no man, nor cut off any man from the right of communion, for thinking otherwise than he held; yet he conceived Stephen and his adherents † to hold a pernicious error. And St. Augustine, though, disputing with the Donatists, he uses some tergiversation in the point, yet confesses elsewhere, that "it is not found, that Cyprian did ever change his opinion." And so far was he from conceiving any necessity of doing so, by submitting to the judgment of the bishop and church of Rome, that he plainly professes, that no other bishop—but our Lord Jesus only, had power to judge (with authority) of his judgment;—and as plainly intimates, that Stephen, for usurping such a power, and making himself—a judge over bishops, was little better than a tyrant—and as heavily almost he censures him, and peremptorily opposes him as obstinate in error, in that very place where he delivers that famous saying, "how can he have God for his father, who hath not the church for his mother!" Little doubting, it seems, but a man might have the church for his mother, who stood in opposition to the church of Rome, and being far from thinking, what you fondly obtrude upon him, that to be united to the Roman church, and to the church, was all one; and that separation from St. Peter's chair was a mark, I mean a certain mark, either of schism or heresy. If, after all this, you will catch at a phrase or a compliment of St. Cyprian's, and with that hope to persuade protestants, who know this story as well as their own name, that St. Cyprian did be-

* Vide Conc. Carth. apud Sur. to. 1.

† Bell. l. ii. de Conc. c. v. Aug. ep. 48. et l. i. de Bap. c. xviii.

lieve—that falsehood could not have access to the Roman church—and that opposition to it was the brand of a heretic; may we not well expect, that you will, the next time you write, vouch Luther and Calvin also for abettors of this fancy, and make us poor men believe, not only (as you say) that we have no metaphysics, but that we have no sense? And, when you have done so it will be no great difficulty for you to assure us, that we read no such thing in Bellarmine * as that Cyprian was always accounted in the number of catholics; nor in Canisius, that he was a most excellent doctor, and a glorious martyr; nor in your calendar, that he is a saint and a martyr; but that all these are deceptions of our sight, and that you ever esteemed him a very schismatic and a heretic, as having on him the mark of the beast —opposition to the chair of St. Peter: nay, that he (whatever he pretended) knew and believed himself to be so, inasmuch as he knew (as you pretend) and esteemed this opposition to be the mark of heresy, and knew himself to stand, and stand out in such an opposition.

26. But we need not seek so far for matter to refute the vanity of this pretence. Let the reader but peruse this very Epistle, out of which this sentence is alleged, and he shall need no further satisfaction against it: for he shall find, first, that you have helped the dice a little with a false, or, at least, with a very bold and strained translation; for St. Cyprian saith not, "to whom falsehood cannot have access," by which many of your fa-

* Bell. l. ii. de Con. c. v. Sect. 1. Canisius in Initio Catech. Sept. die 14.

vourable readers, I doubt, understood that Cyprian had exempted that church from a possibility of error, but, "to whom perfidiousness cannot have access," meaning by perfidiousness in the abstract, according to a common figure of speech, those perfidious schismatics, whom he there complains of; and of these, by rhetorical insinuation, he says, that "with such good Christians as the Romans were, it was not possible they should find favourable entertainment." Not that he conceived it any way impossible they should do so; for the very writing his Epistle, and many passages in it, plainly shew the contrary; but because he was confident, or, at least, would seem to be confident, they never would, and so by his good opinion and confidence in the Romans, lay an obligation upon them to do as he presumed they would do; as also in the end of his Epistle he says, even of the people of the church of Rome, that "being defended by the providence of their bishop, nay, by their own vigilance sufficiently guarded, they could not be taken nor deceived with the poison of heretics." Not that, indeed, he thought either this or the former any way impossible: for to what purpose, but for prevention hereof, did he write this long, and accurate, and vehement Epistle to Cornelius? Which sure had been most vainly done, to prevent that which he knew or believed impossible! Or how can this consist with his taking notice in the beginning of it, that Cornelius "was somewhat moved and wrought upon by the attempts of his adversaries," with his reprehending him for being so, and with his vehement exhorting him to courage and constancy, or with his request to him in the conclu-

sion of his Epistle, that it should "be read publicly to the whole clergy and laity of Rome, to the intent that if any contagion of their poisoned speech, and pestiferous semination, had crept in amongst them, it might be wholly taken away from the ears and the hearts of the brethren; and that the entire and sincere charity of good men might be purged from all dross of heretical detraction?" Or, lastly, with his vehement persuasions to them to decline, "for the time to come, and resolutely avoid their word and conference, because their speech crept as a canker, as the apostle saith; because 'evil communication would corrupt good manners,' because wicked men carry perdition in their mouths, and hide fire in their lips?" All which had been but vain and ridiculous pageantry, had he verily believed the Romans such inaccessible forts, such immoveable rocks, as the former sentences would seem to import, if we will expound them rigidly and strictly, according to the exigence of the words, and not allow him, who was a professed master of the art, to have used here a little rhetoric, and to say—that could not be, whereof he had no absolute certainty but that it might be, but only had, or would seem to have, a great confidence, that it never would be, *Ut fides habita fidem obligaret*; that he, professing to be confident of the Romans, might lay an obligation upon them to do as he promised himself they would do. For as for joining the principal church and the chair of Peter, how that will serve for your present purpose of proving separation from the Roman church a mark of heresy, I suppose it is hard to understand! Nor, indeed, how it will advantage you in any

testimony of the Roman church only human and credible, though perhaps more credible than any one church beside (as one man's testimony is more credible than another's); but certainly much more credible, which was enough for his purpose, than that secret tradition, to which those heretics pretended, against whom he wrote, overbearing them with an argument of their own kind, far stronger than their own. Now, if Irenæus thought the testimony of the Roman church in this point only human and fallible, then surely he could never think either adhering to it a certain mark of a catholic, or separation from it a certain mark of a heretic.

29. Again, whereas your great Achilles, Cardinal Perron, (in French, as also his noble Translatress, misled by him, in English) knowing that men's resorting to Rome would do his cause little service, hath made bold with the Latin tongue, as he does very often with the Greek, and rendered *Ad hanc ecclesiam necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam*, "To this church it is necessary that every church should agree," you have translated it as it should be, "to this church it is necessary that all churches resort;" wherein you have shewed more sincerity, and have had more regard to make the author speak sense. For if he had said—By shewing the tradition of the Roman church, we confound all heretics; for to this church all churches must agree;—what had this been, but to give for a reason that which was more questionable than the thing in question? As being neither evident in itself, and plainly denied by his adversaries, and not at all proved, nor offered to be proved, here or elsewhere, by Irenæus. To speak

thus therefore had been weak and ridiculous. But, on the other side, if we conceive him to say thus:—You heretics decline a trial of your doctrine by Scripture, as being corrupted and imperfect, and not fit to determine controversies without recourse to tradition; and, instead hereof, you fly for a refuge to a secret tradition, which you pretend that you received from your ancestors, and they from the apostles; certainly your calumnies against Scripture are most unjust and unreasonable: but yet moreover assure yourselves, that if you will be tried by tradition, even by that also you will be overthrown. For our tradition is far more famous, more constant, and in all respects more credible, than that which you pretend to. It were easy for me to muster up against you the uninterrupted successions of all the churches founded by the apostles, all conspiring in their testimonies against you: but because it were too long to number up the successions of all churches, I will content myself with the tradition of the most ancient and most glorious church of Rome, which alone is sufficient for the confutation and confusion of your doctrine, as being in credit and authority, as far beyond the tradition you build upon, as the light of the sun is beyond the light of a glow-worm. For to this church, by reason it is placed in the imperial city, whither all men's affairs do necessarily draw them, or by reason of the powerful principality it hath over all the adjacent churches, there is, and always hath been, a necessity of a perpetual recourse of all the faithful round about; who, if there had been any alteration in the church of Rome, could not, in all probability, but have observed it. But they, to

the contrary, have always observed in this church the very tradition which came from the apostles, and no other.—I say, if we conceive his meaning thus, his words will be intelligible and rational; which, if instead of *resort*, we put in *agree*, will be quite lost. Herein therefore we have been beholden to your honesty, which makes me think you did not wittingly falsify, but only twice in this sentence mistake *undique* for *ubique*, and translated it "every where," and "of what place soever," instead of round about. For that it was necessary for all the faithful, of what place soever, to resort to Rome is not true. That the apostolic tradition hath always been conserved there from those who are every where, is not sense. Now instead of *conservata* read *observata*, as in all probability it should be, and translate *undique* truly "round about," and then the sense will be both plain and good; for then it must be rendered thus:—For to this church, by reason of a more powerful principality, there is a necessity that all the churches, that is, all the faithful round about, should resort, in which the apostolic tradition hath been always observed by those who were round about.—If any man say, I have been too bold a critic in substituting *observata* instead of *conservata;* I desire him to know, that the conjecture is not mine; and therefore, as I expect no praise for it, so I hope I shall be far from censure. But I would entreat him to consider, whether it be not likely, that the same Greek word, signifying *observo* and *conservo*, the translator of Irenæus, who could hardly speak Latin, might not easily mistake, and translated διατήρηται, *conservata est*, instead of *observata est:* or whether it be not likely, that

those men, which anciently wrote books, and understood them not, might not easily commit such an error: or whether the sense of the place can be salved any other way; if it can, in God's name let it; if not, I hope he is not to be condemned, who with such a little alteration hath made that sense, which he found nonsense.

30. But whether you will have it *observata* or *conservata*, the new *sumqsimus* or the old *mumpsimus*, possibly it may be something to Irenæus; but to us, or our cause, it is no way material. For if the rest be rightly translated, neither will *conservata* afford you any argument against us, nor *observata* help us to any evasion. For though at the first hearing the glorious attributes here given (and that justly) to the church of Rome—the confounding heretics with her tradition, and saying, it is necessary for all churches to resort to her—may sound like arguments for you; yet he that is attentive, I hope, will easily discover, that it might be good and rational in Irenæus, having to do with heretics, who, somewhat like those who would be the only catholics, declined a trial by Scripture, as not containing the truth of Christ perfectly, and not fit to decide controversies, without recourse to tradition: I say, he will easily perceive, that it might be rational in Irenæus to urge them with any tradition of more credit than their own, especially a tradition consonant to Scripture, and even contained in it; and yet that it may be irrational in you to urge us, who do not decline Scripture, but appeal to it as a perfect rule of faith, with a tradition which we pretend is many ways repugnant to Scripture, and repug-

nant to a tradition far more general than itself, which gives testimony to Scripture; and, lastly, repugnant to itself, as giving attestation both to Scripture, and to doctrines plainly contrary to Scripture. Secondly, That the authority of the Roman church was then a far greater argument of the truth of her tradition, when it was united with all other apostolic churches, than now, when it is divided from them, according to that of Tertullian: "had the churches erred, they would have varied; but that, which is the same in all, cannot be error, but tradition." And therefore Irenæus's argument may be very probable, yet yours may be worth nothing. Thirdly, That fourteen hundred years may have made a great deal of alteration in the Roman church; as rivers though near the fountain they may retain their native and unmixed sincerity, yet in long progress cannot but take in much mixture that came not from the fountain. And, therefore, the Roman tradition, though then pure, may now be corrupted and impure: and so this argument (being one of those things which are the worse for wearing) might in Irenæus's time be strong and vigorous, and after declining and decaying, may long since have fallen to nothing: especially, considering that Irenæus plays the historian only, and not the prophet, and says only, that the "apostolic tradition had been always there, as in other apostolic churches," conserved or observed, choose you whether; but that—it should be always so, he says not, neither had he any warrant. He knew well enough, that there was foretold a great "falling away" of the churches of Christ to antichrist; that the Roman church, in particular, was forewarned, that she

also — nay,* the whole church of the gentiles might fall, if they looked not to their standing: and, therefore, to secure her, that she should stand for ever, he had no reason nor authority. Fourthly, That it appears manifestly, out of this book of Irenæus, quoted by you, that the doctrine of the Chiliasts was in his judgment apostolic tradition, as also it was esteemed (for aught appears to the contrary) by all the doctors, and saints, and martyrs, of or about his time; for all that speak of it, or whose judgments in the point are any way recorded, are for it: and Justin Martyr †professeth, that all good and orthodox Christians of his time believed it; and those that did not, he reckons amongst heretics. Now I demand, was this tradition one of those that was conserved and observed in the church of Rome, or was it not? If not, had Irenæus known so much, he must have retracted this commendation of that church. If it was, then the tradition of the present church of Rome contradicts the ancient, and accounts it heretical; and then sure it can be no certain note of heresy, to depart from them, who have departed from themselves, and prove themselves subject unto error, by holding contradictions. Fifthly, and lastly, That out of the story of the church, it is as manifest as the light at noon, that though Irenæus did esteem the Roman tradition a great argument of the doctrine which he there delivers and defends against the heretics of his time, viz. that there is one God; yet he was very far from thinking that church was, and ever should be, a safe keeper, and an infallible witness, of tradition

* Rom. xi. † In Dial. cum Tryphon.

in general; inasmuch as, in his own life, his actions proclaimed the contrary. For when Victor, bishop of Rome, obtruded the Roman tradition, touching the time of Easter, upon the Asian bishops, under the pain of excommunication and damnation; Irenæus, and all the other western bishops, though agreeing with him in his observation, yet sharply reprehended him for excommunicating the Asian bishops for their disagreeing; plainly shewing, that they esteemed that not a necessary doctrine, and a sufficient ground of excommunication, which the Bishop of Rome and his adherents did so account of: for otherwise, how could they have reprehended him for excommunicating them, had they conceived the cause of this excommunication just and sufficient? and, besides, evidently declaring, that they esteemed not separation from the Roman church a certain mark of heresy, seeing they esteemed not them heretics, though separated and cut off from the Roman church.

Cardinal Perron,* to avoid the stroke of this convincing argument, raiseth a cloud of eloquent words, which, because you borrow them of him in your second part, I will here insert, and with short censures dispel; and let his idolaters see, that truth is not afraid of giants. His words are these:

"The first instance, then, that Calvin† allegeth against the pope's censures, is taken from Eusebius, *(a)* an Arian author, and from Ruffinus, *(b)* enemy to the Roman church, his trans-

* Lib. iii. c. ii. of his Reply to K. James, c. ii. sect. 32.
† Calv. ubi supra.

lator, who writ *(c)* that St. Irenæus reprehended Pope Victor, for having excommunicated the churches of Asia, for the question of the day of Pasche, which they observed according to a particular tradition that St. John had introduced *(d)* for a time in their provinces, because of the neighbourhood of the Jews, and to bury the synagogue with honour, and not according to the universal tradition of the apostles. 'Irenæus (saith Calvin) reprehended Pope Victor bitterly, because for a light cause he had moved a great and perilous contention in the church.' There is this in the text that Calvin produceth—'He reprehended him, that he had not done well, to cut off from the body of unity so many and so great churches.' But against whom maketh he this, but *(e)* against those that object it? For who sees not that * St. Irenæus doth not there reprehend the pope for the *(f)* want of power, but for the ill use of his power; and doth not reproach the Pope that he could not excommunicate the Asians, but admonisheth him, that for *(g)* so small a cause he should not have cut off so many provinces from the body of the church? 'Irenæus (saith Eusebius) † did fitly exhort Pope Victor, that he should not cut off all the churches of God which held this ancient tradition.' And Ruffinus, translating and invenoming Eusebius, saith, ‡ 'He questioned Victor, that he had not done well, in cutting off from the body of unity so many and so great churches of God.' And in truth how could St. Irenæus have reprehended the pope for want of power? He that

* Ruffin. in Vers. Hist. Eccl. Eus. l. v. c. xxiv.

† Eus. Hist. Eccl. l. v. c. xxiv.

‡ Ruffin. ib. c. xxiv. Iren. l. iii. c. iii. 1 book, ch. xxv.

cries—To the Roman church, because of a more powerful principality; that is to say, as above appeareth, *(h)* because of a principality more powerful than the temporal; or, (as we have expounded other-where) because of a more powerful original, *(i)* it is necessary that every church should agree: and *(k)* therefore St. Irenæus allegeth not to Pope Victor the example of him, and of the other bishops of the Gauls * assembled in a council holden expressly for this effect, who had not excommunicated the Asians: nor the example of Narcissus, bishop of Jerusalem, and of the bishops of Palestina, assembled in another council, holden expressly for the same effect, who had not excommunicated them; nor the example of Palmas, and of the other bishops of Pontus, assembled in the same manner, and for the same cause, in the region of Pontus, who had not excommunicated them; but only alleges to him the example of the popes, his predecessors: † 'The prelates (saith he) who have presided before Soter, in the church where thou presidest, Anisius, Pius, Hyginus, Telesphorus, and Sixtus, have not observed this custom, &c. and, nevertheless, none of those that observed it have been excommunicated.' And yet, O admirable providence of God! the *(l)* success of the after-ages shewed, that even in the use of his power the pope's proceeding was just. For after the death of Victor,‡ the councils of Nicea, of Constantinople, and of Ephesus, excommunicated again those that held the same custom with

* Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. v. c. xxii.

† Iren. apud Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. v. c. xxvi.

‡ Conc. Antioch. c. i. Conc. Const. c. 7. Conc. Eph. p. 2. act. 6.

the provinces that the pope had excommunicated, and placed them in the catalogue of heretics, under the titles of heretics quartodecumans.

" But to this instance Calvin's sect do annex two new observations; the first, that the pope having threatened the bishops of Asia to excommunicate them, Polycrates, the bishop of Ephesus and metropolitan of Asia, despised the pope's threats, as it appears by the answer of the same Polycrates to Pope Victor, which is inserted in the writings of Eusebius,* and of St. Jerome, and which Jerome seemeth to approve, when he saith, he reports it to shew the spirit and authority of the man. And the second, that when the pope pronounced anciently his excommunications, he did no other thing but separate himself from the communion of those that he excommunicated, and did not thereby separate them from the universal communion of the church. To the first then we say, that so far is this Epistle of Polycrates from abating and diminishing the pope's authority, that contrariwise it greatly magnifies and exalts it. For although Polycrates, blinded with the love of the custom of his nation, which he believed to be grounded upon the word of God, who had assigned the fourteenth of the month of March † for the observation of the Pasche, and upon the example of St. John's tradition, ‡ maintains it obstinately; nevertheless this that he answers, speaking in his own name, and in the name of the council of the bishops of Asia, to whom he pre-

* Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. v. c. xxiv. Hieron. in Script. Eccl. in Polycr.

† Exod. xii.

‡ Hieron. ubi supra.

sided, 'I fear not those that threaten us; for my elders have said, It is better to obey God than man;' doth it not shew, that had it not been, that he believed the pope's threat was against the express words of God, there had been cause to fear it, and he had been obliged to obey him? For *(m)* who knows not, that this answer, 'It is better to obey God than man,' is not to be made but to those whom we were obliged to obey, if their commandments were not contrary to the commandments of God? And that he adds, that he had called the bishops of Asia to a national council, being *(n)* summoned to it by the pope; doth it not insinuate, that the other councils, whereof Eusebius * speaks, that were holden about this matter, through all the provinces of the earth, and particularly that of Palestina, which, if you believe the act that Beda † said came to his hands, Theophilus, archbishop of Cæsarea, had called by the authority of Victor, were holden at the instance of the pope, and, consequently, that the pope was the first mover of the universal church? And that the councils of Nicea, of Constantinople, of Ephesus, embraced the censure of Victor, and excommunicated those that observed the custom of Polycrates; doth it not prove, that it was not the pope, but *(o)* Polycrates, that was deceived in believing, that the pope's commandment was against God's commandment? And that St. Jerome himself celebrates the paschal Homilies of Theophilus, Patriarch of Alexandria, which followed the order of Nicea concerning the Pasche:

* Euseb. Hist. Eccl. l. v. c. xxiii.

† Beda in frag. de Æquinoctio vernali.

doth it not justify, that when St. Jerome saith, that, he reports the Epistle of Polycrates, 'to shew the spirit and authority of the man,' he intends by authority, not authority of right, but of fact, that is to say, the credit that Polycrates had amongst the Asians, and other quartodecumans?"

These are the Cardinal's words, the most material and considerable passages whereof, to save the trouble of repetition, I have noted with letters of reference; whereunto my answers, noted respectively with the same letters, follow now in order.

(a) If Eusebius were an Arian author, it is nothing to the purpose; what he writes there is no Arianism, nor any thing towards it. Never any error was imputed to the Arians for denying the authority or the infallibility of the bishop or church of Rome. Besides, what Eusebius says, he says out of Irenæus: neither doth or can the Cardinal deny the story to be true, and therefore he goes about by indirect arts to foil it, and cast a blur upon it. Lastly, Whensoever Eusebius says any thing, which the Cardinal thinks for the advantage of his side, he cites him, and then he is no Arian; or at least he would not take that for an answer to the arguments he draws out of him.

(b) That Ruffinus was enemy to the Roman church, is said, but not proved, neither can it be.

(c) Eusebius says the same also of *cæteri omnes episcopi*, all the other bishops, that they advised Victor to keep those things that belonged to peace and unity, and that they sharply reprehended Victor for having done otherwise.

(d) This is said, but no offer made of any proof of it: the Cardinal thinks we must take every thing upon his word. They to whom the tradition was

delivered, Polycrates and the Asian bishops, knew no such matter, nay, professed the contrary. And who is more likely to know the truth, they who lived within two ages of the fountain of it, or the Cardinal who lived sixteen ages after it?

(e) How can it make against those that object it, seeing it is evident from Irenæus's reprehensions, that he thought Victor and the Roman church no infallible nor sufficient judge of what was necessary to be believed and done, what not; what was universal tradition, what not; what was a sufficient ground of excommunication, and what not; and, consequently, that there was no such necessity as is pretended, that all other churches should in matters of faith conform themselves to the church of Rome?

(f) This is to suppose, that excommunication is an act, or argument, or sign, of power and authority in the party excommunicating, over the party excommunicated; whereas it is undeniably evident out of the church story, that it was often used by equals upon equals, and by inferiors upon superiors, if the equals or inferiors thought their equals or superiors did any thing which deserved it.

(g) And what is this but to confess, that they thought that a small cause of excommunication and insufficient, which Victor and his adherents thought great and sufficient: and, consequently, that Victor and his part declared that to be a matter of faith, and of necessity, which they thought not so? And where was then their conformity?

(h) True, you have so expounded it, but not proved nor offered any proof of your exposition. This also we must take upon your authority.

Irenæus speaks not one word of any other power, to which he compares, or before which he prefers, the power of the Roman church. And it is evident, out of the council of Chalcedon,* that—all the principality which it had, was given it (not by God, but) by the church, in regard it was seated in the imperial city.—Whereupon, when afterwards Constantinople was the imperial city, they decreed, that—that church should have equal privileges, and dignity, and pre-eminence, with the church of Rome.—All the fathers agreed in this decree, saving only the legates of the bishop of Rome: shewing plainly, that they never thought of any supremacy given the bishops of Rome by God, or grounded upon Scripture, but only by the church, and therefore alterable at the church's pleasure.

(i) This is falsely translated: *Convenire ad Romanam ecclesiam,* every body knows, signifies no more but to resort or come to the Roman church; which then there was a necessity that men should do, because that the affairs of the empire were transacted in that place. But yet Irenæus says not so of every church simply, which had not been true, but only of the adjacent churches; for so he expounds himself in saying, "To this church it is necessary that every church;" that is, all the faithful, round about, should resort. With much more reason therefore we return the argument thus: had Irenæus thought, that all churches must of necessity agree with the Roman, how could he and all other bishops have then pronounced that to be no matter of faith, no suffici-

* Can. 28.

ent ground of excommunication, which Victor and his adherents thought to be so? And how then could they have reprehended Victor so much for the ill use of his power, as Cardinal Perron confesses they did; seeing, if that was true which is pretended, in this also as well as other things, it was necessary for them to agree with the church of Rome?

Some there are that say, but more wittily than truly, that all Cardinal Bellarmine's works are so consonant to themselves, as if he had written them in two hours. Had Cardinal Perron wrote his book in two hours, sure he would not have done that here in the middle of the book, which he condemns in the beginning of it: for here he urgeth a consequence drawn from the mistaken words of Irenæus against his lively and actual practice; which proceeding there he justly condemns of evident injustice. His words are, *"For who knows not, that it is too great an injustice to allege consequences from passages, and even those ill interpreted and misunderstood, and in whose illation there is always some paralogism hid against the express words, and the lively and actual practice of the same fathers from whom they are collected; and that it may be good to take the fathers for adversaries, and to accuse them for want of sense or memory; but not to take them for judges, and to submit themselves to the observation of what they have believed and practised?"

(k) This is nothing to the purpose; he might choose these examples, not as of greater force and authority in themselves, but as fitter to be

* In his Letter to Casaubon, towards the end.

employed against Victor; as domestic examples are fitter and more effectual than foreign: and for his omitting to press him with his own example and others, to what purpose had it been to use them, seeing their letters sent to Victor from all parts, wherein they reprehended his presumption, shewed him sufficiently, that their example was against him? But, besides, he that reads Irenæus's Letter shall see, that in the matter of the Lent fast, and the great variety about the celebration of it, which he parallels with this of Easter, he presseth Victor with the example of himself and others, not bishops of Rome: "Both they (saith he, speaking of other bishops) notwithstanding this difference, retained peace among themselves; and we also among ourselves retain it;" inferring, from his example, that Victor also ought to do so.

(l) If the pope's proceeding was just, then the churches of Asia were indeed, and in the sight of God, excommunicate, and out of the state of salvation; which Irenæus and all the other ancient bishops never thought. And, if they were so, why do you account them saints and martyrs? But the truth is, that these councils did no way shew the pope's proceedings just, but rather the contrary. For though they settled an uniformity in this matter, yet they settled it as a matter formerly indifferent, and not as a matter of faith or necessity, as it is evident out of Athanasius;* and, consequently, they rather declare Victor's

* In Ep. ad Episcopos in Africa; where he clearly shews, that this question was not a question of faith, by saying, "The council of Nice was celebrated by occasion of the Arian heresy, and the difference about Easter: insomuch as they in Syria, and Cilicia, and Mesopotamia, did differ herein from us, and kept this

proceeding unjust, who excommunicated so many churches for differing from him in an indifferent matter.

(m) It seems, then, Polycrates might be a saint and a martyr, and yet think the commands of the Roman church, enjoined upon pain of damnation, contrary to the commandments of God. Besides, St. Peter himself, the head of the church, the vicar of Christ, (as you pretend) made this very answer to the high-priest; yet I hope you will not say he was his inferior, and obliged to obey him. Lastly, Who sees not, that when the pope commands us any thing unjust, as to communicate laymen in one kind, to use the Latin service, we may very fitly say to him—It is better to obey God than man, and yet never think of any authority he hath over us?

(n) Between requesting and summoning, methinks there should be some difference; and Polycrates says no more but he was requested by the church of Rome to call them, and did so. Here then (as very often) the Cardinal is fain to help the dice with a false translation; and his pretence being false, every one must see, that that which he pretends to be insinuated by it, is clearly inconsequent.

(o) Polycrates was deceived, if he believed it to be against God's commandment, and the pope deceived as much in thinking it to be God's commandment; for it was neither one nor the other, but an indifferent matter wherein God had not in-

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feast on the same day with the Jews." But, thanks be to God, an agreement was made, as concerning the faith, so also concerning this holy feast.

terposed his authority. Neither did the council of Nice embrace the censure of Victor, by acknowledging his excommunication to be just and well-grounded, for which the Cardinal neither doth pretend, nor can produce any proof, any way comparable to the fore-alleged words of Athanasius testifying the contrary; though peradventure, having settled the observation, and reduced it to an uniformity, they might excommunicate those who afterward should trouble the church's peace for an indifferent matter. And thus much for Irenæus.

31. I come now to St. Augustine, and to the first place out of him, where he seems to say, that the succession in the see of Peter was the rock which our Saviour meant, when he said, "Upon this rock," &c. I answer, First, We have no reason to be confident of the truth hereof, because St. Augustine himself was not, but retracts it as uncertain, and leaves to the reader whether he will think that or another more probable, Retr. l. i. c. xxvi. Secondly, What he says of the succession in the Roman church in this place, he says it elsewhere of all the successions in all other apostolic churches. Thirdly, That as in this place he urgeth the Donatists with separation from the Roman church, as an argument of their error: so elsewhere he presseth them with their separation from other apostolic churches, nay, more from these than from that; because in Rome the Donatists had a bishop, though not a perpetual succession of them; but in other apostolic churches they wanted both: "These scattered men (saith he of the Donatists, Epist. 165.) read in the holy books in the churches to which the apostles wrote, and have no bishop in them: but what is more

perverse and mad, than to the lectors reading these Epistles to say, Peace with you; and to separate from the peace of these churches, to which these epistles were written?" So Optatus, having done you (as it might seem) great service in upbraiding the Donatists as schismatics, because they had not communion with the church of Rome, overthrows and undoes it all again, and, as it were, with a spunge wipes out all that he had said for you, by adding after, that they were schismatics, because—they had not the fellowship of communion with the seven churches of Asia, to which St. John writes; whereof he pronounces confidently (though I know not upon what ground), *Extra septem ecclesias quicquid foris est, alienum est.* Now, I pray tell me, do you esteem the authority of these fathers a sufficient assurance, that separation from these other apostolic churches was a certain mark of heresy, or not? If so, then your church had been for many ages heretical. If not, how is their authority a greater argument for the Roman, than for the other churches? If you say, they conceived separation from these churches a note of schism, only when they were united to the Roman; so also they might conceive of the Roman, only when it was united to them. If you say they urged this only as a probable, and not as a certain, argument, so also they might do that. In a word, whatsoever answer you can devise to shew, that these fathers made not separation from these other churches a mark of heresy, apply that to your own argument, and it will be satisfied.

32. The other place is evidently impertinent to the present question, nor is there in it any thing but this—That Cæcilian might contemn the number of

his adversaries, because those that were united with him were more, and of more account, than those that were against him.—Had he preferred the Roman church alone, before Cæcilian's enemies, this had been little, but something; but when other countries, from which the gospel came first into Africa, are joined in this patent with the church of Rome, how she can build any singular privilege upon it, I am yet to learn: neither do I see what can be concluded from it, but that in the Roman church was the principality of an * apostolic see, which no man doubts: or that the Roman church was not the mother church, because the gospel came first into Africa; not from her, but from other churches.

33. Thus you see his words make very little or indeed nothing for you. But now his action, which, according to Cardinal Perron's rule, is much more to be regarded than his words, as not being so obnoxious to misinterpretation, I mean his famous opposition of three bishops of Rome, in succession, touching the great question of appeals, wherein he and the rest of the African bishops proceeded so far in the first or second Milevitan council, as to †decree any African excom-

* You do ill to translate it "the principality of the see apostolic," as if there were but one; whereas St. Augustine presently after speaks of apostolical churches, in the plural number; and makes the bishops of them joint-commissioners for the judging of ecclesiastical causes.

† The words of the decree (which also Bellarm. l. i. de Matrim. c. xvii. assures us to have been formed by St. Augustine) are these: "Si qui (Africani) ab episcopis provocandum putaverint, non nisi ad Africana provocent concilia, vel ad primates provinciarum suarum. Ad transmarina autem qui putaverit appellandum, a nullo intra Africam in communionem suscipiatur."

municate, that should appeal to any out of Afric; and therein continued resolute unto death; I say, this famous action of his, makes clearly, and evidently, and infinitely against you. For, had Boniface, and the rest of the African bishops, a great part whereof were saints and martyrs, believed as an article of faith, that union and conformity with the doctrine of the Roman church, in all things which she held necessary, was a certain note of a good catholic, and by God's command necessary to salvation, how was it possible they should have opposed it in this? Unless you will say they were all so foolish as to believe at once direct contradictions, *viz.* that conformity to the Roman church was necessary in all points, and not necessary in this: or so horribly impious, as believing this doctrine of the Roman church true, and her power to receive appeals derived from Divine authority, notwithstanding to oppose and condemn it, and to anathematize all those Africans, of what condition soever, that should appeal unto it; I say—of what condition soever: for, it is evident, that they concluded, in their determination, bishops as well as the inferior clergy and laity: and Cardinal Perron's pretence of the contrary is a shameless falsehood, repugnant to the plain words* of the

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This decree is by Gratian most impudently corrupted. For whereas the fathers of that council intended it particularly against the church of Rome, he tells us they forbad appeals to all, excepting only the church of Rome.

* The words are these: "Præfato debito salutationis officio, impendio deprecamur, ut deinceps ad aures vestras hinc venientes, non facilius admittatis; nec a nobis excommunicatos ultra in communionem velitis recipere; quia hoc etiam Niceno con-

remonstrance of the African bishops to Celestine, bishop of Rome.

34. Your allegation of Tertullian is a manifest conviction of your want of sincerity: for you produce with great ostentation what he says of the church of Rome: but you and your fellows always conceal and dissemble, that immediately before these words he attributes as much for point of direction to any other apostolic church, and that as he sends them to Rome, who lived near Italy, so those near Achaia he sends to Corinth, those about Macedonia to Philippi and Thessalonica, those of Asia to Ephesus. His words are, "Go to now, thou that wilt better employ thy curiosity in the business of thy salvation; run over the apostolical churches, wherein the chairs of the apostles are yet sat upon in their places; wherein their authentic epistles are recited, sounding out the voice, and representing the face, of every one! Is Achaia near thee? There thou hast Corinth. If thou art not far from Macedonia, thou hast Philippi, thou hast Thessalonica. If thou canst go into Asia, there thou hast Ephesus. If thou be adjacent to Italy, thou hast Rome, whose authority is near at hand to us (in Afric): a happy church, into which the apostles poured forth all their doctrine, together with their blood," &c. Now I pray you, Sir, tell me, if you can for blushing, why this place might not have been urged by a Corinthian, or Philippian, or Thessalonian, or an Ephesian, to shew, that, in the judgment of Tertullian, separa-

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cilio definitum facile advertet venerabilitas tua. Nam si de inferioribus clericis vel laicis videtur id præcaveri, quanto magis hoc de episcopis voluit observari?"

tion from any of their churches is a certain mark of heresy, as justly and rationally as you allege it to vindicate this privilege to the Roman church only. Certainly, if you will stand to Tertullian's judgment, you must either grant the authority of the Roman church, though at that time a good topical argument, and perhaps a better than any the heretics had, especially in conjunction with other apostolic churches; yet, I say, you must grant it perforce but a fallible guide, as well as that of Ephesus, and Thessalonica, and Philippi, and Corinth; or you shall maintain the authority of every one of these infallible as well as the Roman. For though he make a panegyric of the Roman church in particular, and of the rest only in general, yet, as I have said, for point of direction, he makes them all equal, and therefore makes them (choose you whether) either all fallible, or all infallible. Now you will and must acknowledge, that he never intended to attribute infallibility to the churches of Ephesus or Corinth; or, if he did, that (as experience shews) he erred in doing so: and what can hinder, but then we may say also, that he never intended to attribute infallibility to the Roman church; or, if he did, that he erred in doing so?

35. From the saying of St. Basil, certainly nothing can be gathered, but only that the bishop of Rome may discern between that which is counterfeit, and that which is lawful and pure, and without any diminution may preach the faith of our ancestors. Which certainly he might do, if ambition and covetousness did not hinder him, or else I should never condemn him for doing otherwise. But is there no difference between *may* and

must? Between he may do so, and he cannot but do so? Or doth it follow, because he may do so, therefore he always shall or will do so? In my opinion rather the contrary should follow: for he that saith, you may do thus, implies, according to the ordinary sense of the words, that if he will he may do otherwise. You certainly may, if you please, leave abusing the world with such sophistry as this: but whether you will or no, of that I have no assurance.

36. Your next witness I would willingly have examined; but it seems you are unwilling he should be found, otherwise you would have given us your direction where we might have him. Of that Maximianus, who succeeded Nestorius, I can find no such thing in the councils: neither can I believe, that any patriarch of Constantinople twelve hundred years ago was so base a parasite of the see of Rome.

37. Your last witness, John of Constantinople, I confess, speaks home, and advanceth the Roman see even to heaven; but I fear it is, that his own may go up with it, which he there professes to be all one see with the see of Rome; and therefore his testimony, as speaking in his own cause, is not much to be regarded. But besides, I have little reason to be confident, that this epistle is not a forgery; for certainly Binius hath obtruded upon us many a hundred such. This, though written by a Grecian, is not extant in Greek, but in Latin only. Lastly, it comes out of a suspicious place, an old book of the Vatican Library, which Library the world knows to have been the mint of very many impostures.

38. Ad §. 20—23. The sum of your discourse

in the four next sections, if it be pertinent to the question in agitation, must be this:—Want of succession of bishops and pastors, holding always the same doctrine, and of the forms of ordaining bishops and priests, which are in use in the Roman church, is a certain mark of heresy: but protestants want all these things, therefore they are heretics.—To which I answer, That nothing but want of truth, and holding error, can make or prove any man or church heretical. For, if he be a true Aristotelian, or Platonist, or Pyrrhonian, or Epicurean, who holds the doctrine of Aristotle, or Plato, or Pyrrho, or Epicurus, although he cannot assign any that held it before him for many ages together; why should I not be made a true and orthodox Christian, by believing all the doctrine of Christ, though I cannot derive my descent from a perpetual succession that believed it before me? By this reason, you should say as well, that no man can be a good bishop, or pastor, or king, or magistrate, or father, that succeeds a bad one. For, if I may conform my will and actions to the commandments of God, why may I not embrace his doctrine with my understanding, although my predecessors do not so? You have above, in this chapter, defined faith—a free, infallible, obscure, supernatural, assent to Divine truths, because they are revealed by God, and sufficiently propounded: this definition is very fantastical; but for the present I will let it pass, and desire you to give me some piece or shadow of reason, why I may not do all this without a perpetual succession of bishops and pastors, that have done so before me. You may judge as uncharitably, and speak as maliciously of me, as

your blind zeal to your superstition shall direct you; but certainly I know (and with all your sophistry you cannot make me doubt of what I know), that I do believe the gospel of Christ (as it is delivered in the undoubted books of canonical Scripture), as verily as that it is now day, that I see the light, that I am now writing; and I believe it upon this motive, because I conceive it sufficiently, abundantly, superabundantly, proved to be Divine revelation; and yet in this I do not depend upon any succession of men, that have always believed it without any mixture of error; nay, I am fully persuaded, there hath been no such succession, and yet do not find myself any way weakened in my faith by the want of it, but so fully assured of the truth of it, that not only though your devils at Lowden do tricks against it, but though an angel from heaven should gainsay it, or any part of it, I persuade myself, that I should not be moved. This I say, and this I am sure is true; and if you will be so hypersceptical as to persuade me, that I am not sure that I do believe all this, I desire you to tell me, How are you sure, that you believe the church of Rome? For if a man may persuade himself he doth believe what he doth not believe, then may you think you believe the church of Rome, and yet not believe it. But if no man can err concerning what he believes, then you must give me leave to assure myself, that I do believe, and consequently that any man may believe the foresaid truths upon the foresaid motives, without any dependence upon any succession, that hath believed it always. And as from your definition of faith, so from your definition of heresy, this fancy may

be refuted. For questionless, no man can be a heretic but he that holds a heresy, and a heresy, you say, is a voluntary error; therefore no man can be necessitated to be a heretic whether he will or no, by want of such a thing that is not in his power to have: but that there should have been a perpetual succession of believers in all points orthodox, is not a thing which is in our own power; therefore our being, or not being heretics, depends not on it. Besides, what is more certain than that he may make a straight line, who hath a rule to make it by, though never man in the world had made any before? And why then may not he that believes the Scripture to be the word of God, and the rule of faith, regulate his faith by it, and consequently believe aright, without much regarding what other men either will do, or have done? It is true, indeed, there is a necessity, that if God will have his word believed, he by his providence must take order, that either by succession of men, or by some other means, natural or supernatural, it be preserved and delivered, and sufficiently notified to be his word; but that this should be done by a succession of men that holds no error against it, certainly there is no more necessity, than that it should be done by a succession of men that commit no sin against it. For if men may preserve the records of a law, and yet transgress it, certainly they may also preserve directions for their faith, and yet not follow them. I doubt not but lawyers at the bar do find, by frequent experience, that many men preserve and produce evidences, which, being examined, ofttimes make against themselves. This they do ignorantly, it being in

their power to suppress, or perhaps to alter them. And why then should any man conceive it strange, that an erroneous and corrupted church should preserve and deliver the Scriptures uncorrupted, when indeed, for many reasons which I have formerly alleged, it was impossible for them to corrupt them? Seeing, therefore, this is all the necessity that is pretended of a perpetual succession of men orthodox in all points, certainly there is no necessity at all of any such, neither can the want of it prove any man or any church heretical.

39. When therefore you have produced some proof of this, which was your major in your former syllogism, that want of succession is a certain mark of heresy, you shall then receive a full answer to your minor. We shall then consider, Whether your indelible character be any reality, or whether it be a creature of your own making, a fancy of your own imagination? And if it be a thing, and not only a word, whether our bishops and priests have it not as well as yours; and whether some men's persuasions, that there is no such thing, can hinder them from having it, or prove that they have it not, if there be any such thing (any more than a man's persuasion, that he has not taken physic or poison, will make him not to have taken it, if he has, or hinder the operation of it)? And whether Tertullian, in the place quoted by you, speaks of a priest made a layman by just deposition or degradation, and not by a voluntary desertion of his order? And whether in the same place he set not some mark upon heretics that will agree to your church? Whether all the authority of our bishops in England, before the Reformation, was conferred on them by the pope? And, if it

were, whether it were the pope's right, or an usurpation? If it were his right, whether by Divine law or ecclesiastical? And if by ecclesiastical only, whether he might possibly so abuse his power, as to deserve to lose it? Whether *de facto* he had done so? Whether, supposing he had deserved to lose it, those that deprived him of it had power to take it from him? Or, if not, whether they had power to suspend him from the use of it until good caution were put in, and good assurance given, that if he had it again, he would not abuse it as he had formerly done? Whether, in case they had done unlawfully that took his power from him, it may not (things being now settled, and the present government established) be as unlawful to go about to restore it? Whether it be not a fallacy to conclude, because we believe the pope hath no power in England, now when the king, and state, and church, had deprived him upon just grounds of it, therefore we cannot believe that he had any before his deprivation? Whether without schism a man may not withdraw obedience from an usurped authority, commanding unlawful things? Whether the Roman church might not give authority to bishops and priests to oppose her errors, as well as a king gives authority to a judge to judge against him, if his cause be bad; as well as Trajan gave his sword to his prefect with this commission, that—if he governed well, he should use it for him; if ill, against him? Whether the Roman church gave not authority to her bishops and priests to preach against her corruptions in manners? And, if so, why not against her errors in doctrine, if she had any? Whether she gave them not authority to

preach the whole gospel of Christ, and consequently against her doctrine, if it should contradict any part of the gospel of Christ? Whether it be not acknowledged lawful in the church of Rome, for any layman, or woman, that has ability, to persuade others by word or writing from error, and unto truth? And why this liberty may not be practised against their religion, if it be false, as well as for it, if it be true? Whether any man need any other commission or vocation than that of a Christian, to do a work of charity? And whether it be not one of the greatest works of charity (if it be done after a peaceable manner, and without an unnecessary disturbance of order), to persuade men out of a false into a true way of eternal happiness? Especially, the apostle having assured us, that he (whosoever he is) "who converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." Whether the first reformed bishops died all at once, so that there were not enough to ordain others in the places that were vacant? Whether the bishops of England may not consecrate a metropolitan of England, as well as the cardinals do the pope? Whether the King or Queen of England, or they that have the government in their hands, in the minority of the prince, may not lawfully commend one to them to be consecrated, against whom there is no canonical exception? Whether the doctrine, that the king is supreme head of the church of England, (as the kings of Judah, and the first Christian emperors, were of the Jewish and Christian church) be any new-found doctrine? Whether it may not be true, that bishops, being made bishops, have their authority immediately

from Christ, though this or that man be not made bishop without the king's authority; as well as you say the pope, being pope, has authority immediately from Christ, and yet this or that man cannot be made pope without the authority of the cardinals? Whether you do well to suppose, that Christian kings have no more authority in ordering the affairs of the church than the great Turk, or the pagan emperors? Whether the king may not give authority to a bishop to exercise his function in some part of his kingdom, and yet not be capable of doing it himself; as well as a bishop may give authority to a physician to practise physic in his diocese, which the bishop cannot do himself? Whether, if Nero the emperor would have commanded St. Peter or St. Paul to preach the gospel of Christ, and to exercise the office of a bishop of Rome, whether they would have questioned his authority to do so? Whether there were any law of God or man that prohibited King James to give commission to bishops, nay, to lay his injunction upon them, to do any thing that is lawful? Whether a casual irregularity may not be lawfully dispensed with? Whether the pope's irregularities, if he should chance to incur any, be indispensable? And, if not, who is he, or who are they, whom the pope is subject unto, that they may dispense with him? Whether that be certain, which you take for granted, that your ordination imprints a character, and ours doth not? Whether the power of consecrating and ordaining by imposition of hands, may not reside in the bishops, and be derived unto them, not from the king, but God? And yet the king have authority to command them to apply this power to such a fit person,

whom he shall commend unto them? As well as if some architects only had the faculty of architecture, and had it immediately by infusion from God himself; yet, if they were the king's subjects, he wants not authority to command them to build him a palace for his use, or a fortress for his service; or, as the King of France pretends not to have power to make priests himself, yet I hope you will not deny him power to command any of his subjects, that has this power to ordain any fit person priest, whom he shall desire to be ordained. Whether it do not follow, that whensoever the king commands a house to be built, a message to be delivered, or a murderer to be executed, that all these things are presently done without intervention of the architect, messenger, or executioner? As well as that they are *ipso facto* ordained and consecrated, who by the king's authority are commended to the bishops to be ordained and consecrated: especially, seeing the king will not deny but that these bishops may refuse to do what he requires to be done lawfully, if the person be unworthy, if worthy, unlawfully indeed, but yet *de facto* they may refuse; and in case they should do so, whether justly or unjustly, neither the king himself, nor any body else, would esteem the person bishop upon the king's designation. Whether many popes, though they were not consecrated bishops, by any temporal prince, yet might not, or did not, receive authority from the emperor to exercise their episcopal function in this or that place? And whether the emperors had not authority, upon their desert, to deprive them of their jurisdiction, by imprisonment or banishment? Whether protestants do indeed pretend

that their reformation is universal? Whether in saying, the Donatists' sect was confined to Africa, you do not forget yourself, and contradict what you said above in §. 17. of this chapter, where you tell us—they had some of their sect residing in Rome? Whether it be certain that none can admit of bishops willingly, but those that hold them of Divine institution? Whether they may not be willing to have them, conceiving that way of government the best, though not absolutely necessary? Whether all those protestants, that conceive the distinction between priests and bishops not to be of Divine institution, be schismatical and heretical for thinking so? Whether your form of ordaining bishops and priests be essential to the constitution of the true church? Whether the forms of the church of England differ essentially from your forms? Whether in saying, that the true church cannot subsist without undoubted true bishops and priests, you have not overthrown the truth of your own church? Wherein I have proved it plainly impossible, that any man should be so much as morally certain, either of his own priesthood, or any other man's. Lastly, Whether any one kind of these external forms, and orders, and government, be so necessary to the being of a church, but that they may be diverse in divers places, and that a good and peaceable Christian may and ought to submit himself to the government of the place where he lives, whatsoever it be? All these questions will be necessary to be discussed for the clearing of the truth of the minor proposition of your former syllogism, and your proofs of it; and I will promise to debate them fairly with you, if first you will bring some better

proof of the major, that want of succession is a certain note of heresy, which for the present remains both unproved and unprobable.

40. Ad §. 23. The fathers, you say, assign succession as one mark of the true church: I confess they did urge tradition as an argument of the truth of their doctrine, and of the falsehood of the contrary; and thus far they agree with you. But now see the difference: they urged it not against all heretics that ever should be, but against them that rejected a great part of the Scripture, for no other reason, but "because it was repugnant to their doctrine, and corrupted other parts with their additions and detractions, and perverted the remainder with divers absurd interpretations:" so Tertullian, not a leaf before the words by you cited. Nay, they urged it against them, who, "when they were confuted out of Scripture, fell to accuse the Scriptures themselves, as if they were not right, and came not from good authority, as if they were various one from another, and as if truth could not be found out of them, by those who know not tradition; for that it was not delivered in writing, (they did mean wholly) but by word of mouth: and that thereupon Paul also said, 'We speak wisdom amongst the perfect.'" So Irenæus, in the very next chapter before that which you allege. Against these men being thus necessitated to do so, they did urge tradition; but what or whose tradition was it? Certainly no other but the joint tradition of all the apostolic churches, with one mouth and one voice, teaching the same doctrine. Or if, for brevity's sake, they produce the tradition of any one church, yet it is apparent, that that one was then in conjunction with all the rest:

Irenæus, Tertullian, Origen, testify as much in the words cited, and St. Augustine in the place before alleged by me. This tradition they did urge against these men, and in a time, in comparison of ours, almost contiguous to the apostles: so near, that one of them, Irenæus, was scholar to one who was scholar to St. John, the apostle. Tertullian and Origen were not an age removed from him: and the last of them all little more than an age from them. Yet after all this they urged it not as a demonstration, but only as a very probable argument, far greater than any their adversaries could oppose against it. So Tertullian, in the place above quoted, Sect. 5. "How is it likely, that so many and so great churches should err in one faith?" (It should be—should have erred into one faith.) And this was the condition of this argument, as the fathers urged it. Now, if you having to deal with us, who question no book of Scripture, which was not anciently questioned by some whom you yourselves esteemed good catholics; nay, who refuse not to be tried by your own canon, and your own translation; who, in interpreting Scriptures are content to allow all those rules which you propose, only except that we will not allow you to be our judges; if you will come one thousand five hundred years after the apostles, a fair time for the purest church to gather much dross and corruption, and for the mystery of iniquity to bring its work to some perfection, which in the apostles' time began to work; if (I say) you will come thus long after, and urge us with the single tradition of one of these churches, being now catholic to itself alone, and heretical to all the rest; nay, not only with her ancient and

original traditions, but also with her post-nate introduced definitions, and these, as we pretend, repugnant to Scripture and ancient tradition, and all this to decline an indifferent trial by Scripture, under pretence (wherein also you agree with the calumny of the old heretics) that all necessary truth cannot be found in them without recourse to tradition: if, I say, notwithstanding all these differences, you will still be urging us with this argument as the very same, and of the same force with that wherewith the forementioned fathers urged the old heretics; certainly this must needs proceed from a confidence you have not only that we have no school divinity, nor metaphysics, but no logic, or common sense; that we are but pictures of men, and have the definition of rational creatures given us in vain.

41. But now suppose I should be liberal to you, and grant what you cannot prove, that the fathers make succession a certain and perpetual mark of the true church: I beseech you what will come of it? What, that want of succession is a certain sign of heretical company? Truly, if you say so, either you want logic, which is a certain sign of an ill disputer; or are not pleased to use it, which is a worse. For speech is a certain sign of a living man, yet want of speech is no sure argument that he is dead; for he may be dumb, and yet living still; and we may have other evident tokens that he is so, as eating, drinking, breathing, moving. So, though the constant and universal delivery of any doctrine by the apostolic churches, ever since the apostles, be a very great argument of the truth of it, yet there is no certainty but that truth, even Divine truth, may,

through men's wickedness, be contracted from its universality, and interrupted in its perpetuity, and so lose this argument, and yet not want others to justify and support itself. For it may be one of those principles which God hath written in all men's hearts, or a conclusion evidently arising from them: it may be either contained in Scripture in express terms, or deducible from it by apparent consequence. If therefore you intend to prove want of a perpetual succession of professors a certain note of heresy, you must not content yourself to shew, that having it is one sign of truth; but you must shew it to be the only sign of it, and inseparable from it. But this, if you be well advised, you will never undertake; first, because it is an impossible attempt; and then because, if you do it, you will mar all: for by proving this an inseparable sign of catholic doctrine, you will prove your own, which apparently wants it in many points, not to be catholic. For whereas you say—This succession requires two things, agreement with the apostles' doctrine, and an uninterrupted conveyance of it down to them that challenge it; it will be proved against you, that you fail in both points; and that some things wherein you agree with the apostles, have not been held always; as, your condemning the doctrine of the Chiliasts, and holding the eucharist not necessary for infants; and that in many other things you agree not with them, nor with the church for many ages after: for example; in mutilation of the communion, in having your service in such a language as the assistants generally understand not, your offering to saints, your picturing of God, your worshipping of pictures.

42. Ad § 24. As for universality of place, the want whereof you object to protestants as a mark of heresy: you have not set down clearly and univocally what you mean by it, whether universality of fact, or of right; and if of fact, whether absolute or comparative; and if comparative, whether of the church in comparison of any other religion, or only of heretical Christians; or if in comparison of these, whether in comparison of all other sects conjoined, or in comparison only of any one of them. Nor have you proved it by any good argument in any sense to be a certain mark of heresy: for those places of St. Augustine do not deserve the name. And truly in my judgment you have done advisedly in proving it no better. For as for universality of right, or a right to universality, all religions claim it, but only the true has it; and which has it cannot be determined, unless it be first determined which is the true. An absolute universality and diffusion through all the world if you should pretend to, all the world would laugh at you: if you should contend for latitude with any one religion, Mahometanism would carry the victory from you: if you should oppose yourselves against all other Christians besides you, it is certain you would be cast in this suit also: if, lastly, being hard driven, you should please yourselves with being more than any one sect of Christians, it would presently be replied, that it is uncertain whether now you are so, but most certain, that the time has been when you have not been so; then when the * whole world wondered, that it was become Arian; then when

* Hier. contr. Luciferianos.

Athanasius opposed the world, and the world Athanasius; then when your * Liberius having the contemptible paucity of his adherents objected to him as a note of error, answered for himself, "There was a time when there were but three opposed the decree of the king, and yet those three were in the right, and the rest in the wrong; then when the professors of error surpassed the number of the professors of truth, in proportion as the sands of the sea do the stars of heaven (as † St. Augustine acknowledges); then when ‡ Vincentius confesses, that the poison of the Arians had contaminated, not now some certain portion, but almost the whole world; then when the author of Nazianzen's life § testifies, That the heresy of Arius had possessed in a manner the whole extent of the world; and when Nazianzen found cause to cry out, ‖ Where are they who reproach us with our poverty, who define the church by the multitude, and despise the little flock? They have the people, but we the faith. And lastly, when Athanasius was so overborne with shoals and floods of Arians, that he was enforced to write a treatise on purpose ¶ against those who judge of the truth only by plurality of adherents. So that if you had proved want of universality even thus restrained, to be an infallible note of heresy, there would have been no remedy but you must have confessed, that the time was when you were heretics. And besides, I see not how you would have avoided this great inconvenience, of laying grounds, and storing up arguments for antichrist, against he

* In Theod. Hist. l. xvi. c. ii.
† In Ep. 48. ad Vincentium.
‡ Commentarii, l. i. c. iv.
§ In vita Nazianz.
‖ In Orat. Arian. et pro seipso.
¶ Tom. ii.

comes, by which he may prove his company the true church. For it is evident, out of Scripture, and confessed by you, that though his time be not long, his dominion shall be very large; and that the true church shall be then the woman driven into the wilderness.

43. Ad §. 25, 26. The remainder of this chapter, if I would deal strictly with you, I might let pass as impertinent to the question now disputed. For whereas your argument promises, that this whole chapter shall be employed in proving Luther and the protestants guilty of heresy; here you desert this question, and strike out into another accusation of them—That their faith, even of the truth they hold, is not indeed true faith. But put case it were not, does it follow, that the having of this faith makes them heretics, or that they are therefore heretics, because they have this faith? Aristotle believed there were intelligences which moved the spheres; he believed this with a human persuasion, and not with a certain obscure, prudent, supernatural faith; and will you make Aristotle a heretic, because he believed so? You believe there was such a man as Julius Cæsar, that there is such a city as Constantinople, and your belief hereof has not these qualifications which you require to Divine faith. And will you be content, that this shall pass for a sufficient proof, that you are a heretic? Heresy you have defined above to be a voluntary error; but he that believes truth, though his belief be not qualified according to your mind, yet sure in believing truth, he believes no error; and from hence, according to ordinary logic, methinks it should fol-

low, that such a man for doing so cannot be guilty of heresy.

44. But you will say, though he be not guilty of heresy for believing these truths, yet, if his faith be not saving, to what purpose will it be? Truly very little to the purpose of salvation; as little as it is to your proving protestants guilty of heresy. But out of our wonted indulgence, let us pardon this fault also, and do you the favour to hear what you can say, to beget this faith in us, that indeed we have no faith, or at least not such a faith, without which "it is impossible to please God." Your discourse upon this point you have, I know not upon what policy, disjointed, and given us the grounds of it in the beginning of the chapter, and the superstructure here in the end. Them I have already examined, and, for a great part of them, proved them vain and deceitful. I have shewed, by many certain arguments, that though the subject matter of our faith be in itself most certain, yet that absolute certainty of adherence is not required to the essence of faith, no nor to make it acceptable with God; but that to both these effects it is sufficient, if it be firm enough to produce obedience and charity. I have shewed, besides, that prudence is rather commendable in faith, than intrinsical and essential to it: so that whatsoever is here said, to prove the faith of protestants, no faith for want of certainty, or for want of prudence, is already answered before it is objected; for the foundation being destroyed, the building cannot stand. Yet, for the fuller refutation of all pretences, I will here make good that to prove our faith destitute of these qualifica-

tions, you have produced but vain sophisms, and, for the most part, such arguments as return most violently upon yourselves. Thus then you say:

45. First, That their belief wanteth certainty, I prove, because they, denying the universal infallibility of the church, can have no certain ground to know what objects are revealed or testified by God.—But if there be no other ground of certainty, but your church's infallibility, upon what certain ground do you know that your church is infallible? Upon what certain ground do you know all those things which must be known, before you can know that your church is infallible? As, that there is a God; that God hath promised his assistance to your church, in all her decrees; that the Scripture, wherein this promise is extant, is the word of God; that those texts of Scripture, which you allege for your infallibility are uncorrupted; that that which you pretend, is the true sense of them? When you have produced certain grounds for all these things, I doubt not but it will appear, that we also may have grounds certain enough to believe our whole religion, which is nothing else but the Bible, without dependance on the church's infallibility. Suppose you should meet with a man, that for the present believes neither church nor Scripture, nor God, but is ready and willing to believe them all, if you can shew some sufficient ground to build his faith upon; will you tell such a man there are no certain grounds by which he may be converted, or there are? If you say the first, you make all religion an uncertain thing; if the second, then either you must ridiculously persuade, that your church

is infallible, because it is infallible, or that there are other certain grounds besides your church's infallibility.

46. But you proceed and tell us—That Holy Scripture is in itself most true and infallible; but without the direction and declaration of the church, we can neither have certain means to know what Scripture is canonical, nor what translations be faithful, nor what is the true meaning of Scripture.—*Ans.* But all these things must be known before we can know the direction of your church to be infallible; for no other proof of it can be pretended, but only some texts of canonical Scripture, truly interpreted: therefore, either you are mistaken, in thinking there is no other means to know these things, but your church's infallible direction; or we are excluded from all means of knowing her direction to be infallible.

47. But protestants, though, as you suppose, they are persuaded their own opinions are true, and that they have used such means as are wont to be prescribed for understanding the Scripture, as prayer, conferring of texts, &c. yet by their disagreement shew, that some of them are deceived. Now they hold all the articles of their faith upon this only ground of Scripture, interpreted by these rules; and therefore it is clear, that the ground of their faith is infallible in no point at all. The first of these suppositions must needs be true, but the second is apparently false; I mean, that every protestant is persuaded, that he hath used those means which are prescribed for understanding of Scripture. But that which you collect from these suppositions, is clearly inconsequent; and by as good logic you might con-

clude, that logic and geometry stand upon no certain grounds, that the rules of the one and the principles of the other do sometimes fail, because the disagreement of logicians and geometricians shew, that some of them are deceived. Might not a Jew conclude as well against all Christians, that they have no certain ground whereon to rely in their understanding of Scripture, because their disagreements shew that some are deceived; because some deduce from it the infallibility of a church, and others no such matter? So, likewise, a Turk might use the same argument against both Jews and Christians, and an atheist against all religions, and a sceptic against all reason. Might not the one say, men's disagreement in religion shews, that there is no certainty in any; and the other, that experience of their contradictions teacheth, that the rules of reason do sometimes fail? Do not you see, and feel, how void of reason, and how full of impiety, your sophistry is? and how, transported with zeal against protestants, you urge arguments against them, which if they could not be answered, would overthrow not only your own, but all religion? But, God be thanked! the answer is easy and obvious: for let men but remember not to impute the faults of men but only to men, and then it will easily appear, that there may be sufficient certainty in reason, in religion, in the rules of interpreting Scripture, though men, through their faults, take not care to make use of them, and so run into divers errors and dissensions.

48. But protestants cannot determine what points be fundamental, and therefore must remain uncertain, whether or no they be not in some fun-

damental error.—*Ans.* By like reason, since you acknowledge, that every error in points defined and declared by your church, destroys the substance of faith, and yet cannot determine what points be defined, it followeth, that you must remain uncertain, whether or no you be not in some fundamental error, and so want the substance of faith, without which there can be no hope of salvation. Now that you are uncertain what points are defined, appears from your own words, ch. 4. §. 3. of your second part, where, say you,—No less impertinent is your discourse concerning the difficulty to know what is heresy: for we grant, that it is not always easy to determine in particular occasions, whether this or that doctrine be such, because it may be doubtful, whether it be against any Scripture or Divine tradition, or definition of the church. Neither were it difficult to extort from you this confession, by naming divers points, which some of you say are defined, others the contrary, and others hang in suspense, and know not what to determine. But this I have done elsewhere; as also, I have shewed plainly enough, that though we cannot perhaps say in particular, thus much, and no more, is fundamental, yet believing all the Bible, we are certain enough that we believe all that is fundamental. As he that in a receipt takes twenty ingredients, whereof ten only are necessary, though he know not what those ten are, yet, taking the whole twenty, he is sure enough that he hath taken all that are necessary.

49. Ad §. 29.—But that he who erreth against any one revealed truth, loseth all Divine faith, is a very true doctrine delivered by catholic divines

(you mean your own) with so general a consent, that the contrary is wont to be censured as temerarious: now certainly some protestants must do so, because they hold contradictions, which cannot all be true; therefore some of them, at least, have no Divine faith.—*Ans.* I pass by your weakness, in urging protestants with the authority of your divines, which yet in you might very deservedly be censured. For when Dr. Potter, to shew the many actual dissensions between the Romish doctors, notwithstanding their brags of potential unity, refers to Pappus, who has collected out of Bellarmine their contradictions, and sets them down in his own words to the number of 237; and to Flacius, *de Sectis et Controversis Religionis Papisticæ;* you, making the very same use of Brerely against protestants, yet jeer and scorn Dr. Potter, as if he offered you for a proof the bare authority of Pappus and Flacius; and tell him, which is all the answer you vouchsafe him—it is pity that he brings Pappus and Flacius, flat heretics, to prove your many contradictions:—as if he had proved this with the bare authority, the bare judgment, of these men, which sure he does not, but with the formal words of Bellarmine, faithfully collected by Pappus. And why then might we not say to you, it is not pretty, that you bring Brerely, as flat a heretic as Pappus or Flacius, to prove the contradictions of protestants? Yet had he been so vain as to press you with the mere authority of protestant divines in any point, methinks, for your own sake, you should have pardoned him, who here, and in many other places, urge us with the judgment of your divines as with weighty arguments. Yet if the authority

of your divines were even canonical, certainly nothing could be concluded from it in this matter, there being not one of them, who delivers for true doctrine this position of yours, thus nakedly set down, that any error against any one revealed truth destroys all Divine faith. For they all require (not yourself excepted), that this truth must not only be revealed, but revealed publicly, and (all things considered) sufficiently propounded to the erring party, to be one of those which God, under pain of damnation, commands all men to believe. And, therefore, the contradiction of protestants (though this vain doctrine of your divines were supposed true) is but a weak argument, that any of them have no Divine faith, seeing you neither have, nor ever can prove (without begging the question of your church's infallibility), that the truths about which they differ are of this quality and condition. But though out of courtesy we may suppose this doctrine true, yet we have no reason to grant it, nor to think it any thing but a vain and groundless fancy; and, that this very weak and inartificial argument, from the authority of your divines, is the strongest pillar which it hath to support it. Two reasons you allege for it out of Thomas Aquinas; the first whereof vainly supposeth, against reason and experience, that, by the commission of any deadly sin, the habit of charity is quite extirpated. And for the second, though you cry it up for an Achilles, and think, like the Gorgon's head, it will turn us all into stone; and, in confidence of it, insult upon Dr. Potter, as if he durst not come near it; yet in very truth, having considered it well, I find it a serious, grave, prolix, and profound *nothing*. I

could answer it in a word, by telling you, that it begs without all proof, or colour of proof, the main question between us, that the infallibility of your church is either the formal motive or rule, or a necessary condition of faith: which you know we flatly deny, and therefore all that is built upon it has nothing but wind for a foundation. But to this answer I will add a large confutation of this vain fancy, out of one of the most rational and profound doctors of your own church; I mean Estius, who upon the third of the Sent. the 23. dist. §. 13. writes thus: "It is disputed (saith he) whether in him, who believes some of the articles of our faith, and disbelieves others, or perhaps some one, there be faith properly so called in respect of that which he does believe? In which question we must, before all, carefully distinguish between those, who, retaining a general readiness to believe whatsoever the church believes, yet err by ignorance in some doctrine of faith, because it is not as yet sufficiently declared to them, that the church does so believe; and those who, after sufficient manifestation of the church's doctrine, do yet choose to dissent from it, either by doubting of it, or affirming the contrary. For of the former, the answer is easy: but of these, that is, of heretics retaining some part of wholesome doctrine, the question is more difficult, and on both sides by the doctors probably disputed. For that there is in them true faith of the articles wherein they do not err, first, experience seems to convince: for many at this day denying, for example sake, purgatory, or invocation of saints, nevertheless firmly hold, as by Divine revelation—That God is three and one, that the Son of God was

incarnate, and suffered, and other like things. As anciently the Novatians, excepting their peculiar errors, of denying reconciliation to those that fell in persecution, held other things in common with catholics: so that they assisted them very much against the Arians, as Socrates relates in his Ecclesiastical History. Moreover, the same is proved by the example of the apostles, who, in the time of Christ's passion, being scandalized, lost their faith in him: as also, Christ after his resurrection upbraids them with their incredulity, and calls Thomas incredulous, for denying the resurrection, John. xx. Whereupon St. Augustine also in his preface upon Psa. xcvi. saith, that 'After the resurrection of Christ, the faith of those that fell was restored again. And yet we must not say, that the apostles then lost the faith of the Trinity, of the creation of the world, of eternal life, and such-like other articles. Besides, the Jews, before Christ's coming, held the faith of one God, the creator of heaven and earth: who, although they lost the true faith of the Messias by not receiving Christ; yet we cannot say, that they lost the faith of one God, but still retained this article as firmly as they did before.'

"Add hereunto, that neither Jews nor heretics seem to lie, in saying, they believe either the books of the prophets, or the four gospels: it being apparent enough, that they acknowledge in them Divine authority, though they hold not the true sense of them; to which purpose is that in the Acts, ch. xx. 'Believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.' Lastly, It is manifest, that many gifts of God are found even in bad men, and such as are out of the church;

therefore nothing hinders, but that Jews and heretics, though they err in many things, yet in other things may be so divinely illuminated as to believe aright. So St. Augustine seems to teach in his book De Unico Baptismo contra Petilianum, c. 3. in these words: 'When a Jew comes to us to be made a Christian, we destroy not in him God's good things, but his own ill. That he believes one God is to be worshipped; that he hopes for eternal life; that he doubts not of the resurrection, we approve and commend him: we acknowledge, that as he did believe these things, so he is still to believe them; and as he did hold, so he is still to hold them.' Thus he, subjoining more to the same purpose in the next. And again, in the xxvi. chap. and in his third book, De Bapt. contr. Donat. cap. ult. and upon Psa. lxiv. 'But now this reason seems to persuade the contrary; because the formal object of faith seems to be the first verity, as it is manifested by the church's doctrine as the Divine and infallible rule; wherefore, whosoever adheres not to this rule, although he assent to some matters of faith, yet he embraces them not with faith, but with some other kind of assent: as if a man assent to a conclusion, not knowing the reason by which it is demonstrated, he hath not true knowledge, but an opinion only of the same conclusion. Now, that a heretic adheres not to the rule aforesaid, it is manifest; because if he did adhere to it, as Divine and infallible, he would receive all, without exception, which the church teacheth, and so would not be a heretic.' After this manner St. Thom. ii. 2. q. 5. art. 3. From whom yet Durand dissents upon this distinction, thinking, there may be in a

heretic true faith, in respect of the articles in which he doth not err. Others, as Scotus and Bonaventure, define not the matter plainly, but seem to choose a middle way.

" To the authority of St. Augustine and these schoolmen, this may be adjoined, That it is usual with good Christians to say, that heretics have not the entire faith. Whereby it seems to be intimated that some part of it they do retain: whereof this may be another reason; that if the truths, which a Jew or a heretic holds, he should not hold them by faith, but after some other manner, to wit, by his own proper will and judgment, it will follow, that all that excellent knowledge of God and Divine things, which is found in them, is to be attributed not to the grace of God, but to the strength of free-will: which is against St. Augustine, both elsewhere, and especially in the end of his book De Potentia.

" As for the reason alleged to the contrary, we answer—It is impertinent to faith, by what means we believe the prime verity, that is, by what means God useth to confer upon men the gift of faith. For, although now the ordinary means be the testimony and teaching of the church, yet it is certain, that by other means faith hath been given heretofore, and it is given still. For many of the ancients, as Adam, Abraham, Melchisedech, Job, receiveth faith by special revelation; the apostles, by the miracles and preaching of Christ; others again, by the preaching and miracles of the apostles; and, lastly, others, by other means, when as yet they had heard nothing of the infallibility of the church. To little children, by baptism, without any other help, faith is infused: and

therefore it is possible, that a man not adhering to the church's doctrine as a rule infallible, yet may receive some things for the word of God, which do indeed truly belong to the faith; either because they are now, or heretofore have been, confirmed by miracles; or, because he manifestly sees, that the ancient church taught so; or upon some other inducement. And yet, nevertheless, we must not say, that heretics and Jews do hold the faith, but only some part of the faith. For the faith signifies an entire thing, and complete in all parts; whereupon a heretic is said to be simply an infidel, to have lost the faith, and according to the apostle, 1 Tim. i. to have made shipwreck of it, although he holds some things with the same strength of assent, and readiness of will, wherewith by others are held all these points which appertain to the faith." And thus far Estius: whose discourse, I presume, may pass for a sufficient refutation of your argument out of Aquinas. And, therefore, your corollaries drawn from it—That every error against faith involves opposition against God's testimony; that protestants have no faith, no certainty; and that you have all faith, must, together with it, fall to the ground.

50. But, if protestants have certainty, they want obscurity, and so have not that faith, which, as the apostle saith, is of things not appearing.—This argument you prosecute in the next paragraph: but I can find nothing in it, to convince or persuade me, that protestants cannot have as much certainty as is required to faith of an object not so evident as to beget science. If obscurity will not consist with certainty in the highest degree, then you are to blame for requiring to faith contradict-

ing conditions. If certainty and obscurity will stand together, what reason can be imagined, that a protestant may not entertain them both as well as a papist? Your bodies and souls, your understandings and wills, are, I think, of the same condition with ours: and why then may not we be certain of an obscure thing as well as you? And as you make this long discourse against protestants, why may not we, putting church instead of Scripture, send it back again to you? And say—If papists have certainty, they want obscurity, and so have not that faith, which, as the apostle saith, is of things not appearing, or not necessitating our understanding to an assent? For the whole edifice of the faith of papists is settled on these two principles: these particular propositions are the propositions of the church; and the sense and meaning of them is clear and evident, at least in all points necessary to salvation. Now these principles being once supposed, it clearly followeth, that what papists believe as necessary to salvation, is evidently known by them to be true, by this argument: It is certain and evident, that whatsoever is the word of God, or Divine revelation, is true: but it is certain and evident, that these propositions of the church in particular, are the word of God, or Divine revelations: therefore it is certain and evident, that all propositions of the church are true. Which conclusion I take for a major in a second argument, and say thus: It is certain and evident that all propositions of the church are true: but it is certain and evident, that such particulars, for example, the lawfulness of the half-communion, the lawfulness and expedience of Latin service, the doctrine of transubstantiation, indul-

gences, &c. are the propositions of the church: therefore it is certain and evident, that these particular objects are true. Neither will it avail you to say, that the said principles are not evident by natural discourse, but only by the eye of reason, cleared by grace: for supernatural evidence no less (yea, rather more) drowns and excludes obscurity, than natural evidence doth. Neither can the party so enlightened be said voluntarily to captivate his understanding to that light, but rather his understanding is by necessity made captive, and forced not to disbelieve what is presented by so clear a light; and therefore your imaginary faith is not the true faith defined by the apostle, but an invention of your own.

51. And having thus cried quittance with you, I must intreat you to devise (for truly I cannot) some answer to this argument, which will not serve in proportion to your own. For I hope, you will not pretend, that I have done you injury, in settling your faith upon principles which you disclaim. And if you allege this disparity, that you are more certain of your principles than we of ours, and yet you do not pretend that your principles are so evident, as we do that ours are: what is this to say, but that you are more confident than we, but confess you have less reason for it? For the evidence of the thing assented to, be it more or less, is the reason and cause of the assent in the understanding. But then, besides, I am to tell you that you are here, as every where, extremely, if not affectedly, mistaken in the doctrine of protestants; who, though they acknowledge that the things which they believe are in themselves as certain as any demonstrable or sensible

verities, yet pretend not, that their certainty of adherence is most perfect and absolute, but such as may be perfected and increased as long as they "walk by faith, and not by sight." And consonant hereunto, is their doctrine touching the evidence of the objects whereunto they adhere. For you abuse the world and them, if you pretend that they hold the first of your two principles, that these particular books are the word of God (for so I think you mean), either to be in itself evidently certain, or of itself, and being divested of the motives of credibility, evidently credible: for they are not so fond as to conceive, nor so vain as to pretend, that all men do assent to it, which they would, if it were evidently certain; nor so ridiculous as to imagine, that if an Indian, that never heard of Christ or Scripture, should by chance find a Bible in his own language, and were able to read it, that upon the reading it, he would certainly, without a miracle, believe it to be the word of God: which he could not choose, if it were evidently credible. What then do they affirm of it? Certainly, no more than this, that whatsoever man, that is not of a perverse mind, shall weigh with serious and mature deliberation, those great moments of reason which may incline him to believe the Divine authority of Scripture, and compare them with the light objections, that in prudence can be made against it, he shall not choose but find sufficient, nay abundant, inducements to yield unto it firm faith and sincere obedience. Let that learned man, Hugo Grotius, speak for all the rest, in his book of the Truth of the Christian Religion; which book, whosoever attentively peruses, shall find, that a man may have

great reason to be a Christian without dependance upon your church for any part of it: and that your religion is no foundation of, but rather a scandal and an objection against, Christianity. He then in the last chapter of his second book hath these excellent words: "If any be not satisfied with these arguments abovesaid, but desires more forcible reasons for confirmation of the excellency of Christian religion, let such know, that as there are variety of things which be true, so are there divers ways of proving or manifesting the truth. Thus is there one way in mathematics, another in physics, a third in ethics; and, lastly, another kind, when a matter of fact is in question: wherein verily we must rest content with such testimonies as are free from all suspicion of untruth; otherwise, down goes all the frame and use of history, and a great part of the art of physic, together with all dutifulness that ought to be between parents and children; for matters of practice can no way else be known by such testimonies. Now it is the pleasure of Almighty God, that those things, which he would have us to believe (so that the very belief thereof may be imputed to us for obedience), should not so evidently appear, as those things which are apprehended by sense, and plain demonstration, but only be so far forth revealed as may beget faith, and a persuasion thereof, in the hearts and minds of such as are not obstinate; that so the gospel may be as a touchstone for trial of men's judgments, whether they be sound or unsound. For seeing these arguments, whereof we have spoken, have induced so many honest, godly, and wise men, to approve of this religion, it is thereby plain enough, that the

fault of other men's infidelity is not for want of sufficient testimony, but because they would not have that to be had and embraced for truth, which is contrary to their wilful desires; it being a hard matter for them to relinquish their honours, and set at nought other commodities; which thing they know they ought to do, if they admit of Christ's doctrine, and obey what he hath commanded. And this is the rather to be noted of them, for that many other historical narrations are approved by them to be true, which notwithstanding are only manifest by authority, and not by any such strong proofs, and persuasions, or tokens, as do declare the history of Christ to be true; which are evident, partly by the confession of those Jews that are yet alive; and partly in those companies and congregations of Christians, which are anywhere to be found; whereof, doubtless, there was some cause.

Lastly, "Seeing the long duration or continuance of Christian religion, and the large extent thereof, can be ascribed to no human power, therefore the same must be attributed to miracles: or, if any deny that it came to pass through a miraculous manner, this very getting so great strength and power without a miracle, may be thought to surpass any miracle."

52. And now you see, I hope, that protestants neither do, nor need to pretend to any such evidence in the doctrine they believe, as cannot well consist both with the essence and obedience of faith. Let us come now to the last nullity which you impute to the faith of protestants, and that is—want of prudence: touching which point, as I have already demonstrated, that wisdom is not essen-

tial to faith, but that a man may truly believe truth, though upon insufficient motives; so I doubt not but I shall make good, that if prudence were necessary to faith, we have better title to it than you; and that if a wiser than Solomon were here, he should have better reason to believe the religion of protestants than papists, the Bible rather than the council of Trent. But let us hear what you can say.

53. Ad §. 31. You demand then, first of all—What wisdom was it to forsake a church confessed very ancient, and besides which there could be demonstrated no other visible church of Christ upon earth?—I answer, Against God and truth there lies no prescription, and therefore certainly it might be great wisdom to forsake ancient errors for more ancient truths. One God is rather to be followed than innumerable worlds of men; and therefore it might be great wisdom, either for the whole visible church, nay for all the men in the world, having wandered from the way of truth, to return unto it; or for a part of it, nay for one man to do so, although all the world besides were madly resolute to do the contrary. It might be a great wisdom to forsake the errors, though of the only visible church, much more of the Roman, which, in conceiving herself the whole visible church, does somewhat like the frog in the fable, which thought the ditch he lived in to be all the world.

54. You demand again—What wisdom was it to forsake a church acknowledged to want nothing necessary to salvation, endued with succession of bishops, &c. *usque ad* election or choice?—I answer, Yet might it be great wisdom to forsake a

church not acknowledged to want nothing necessary to salvation, but accused and convicted of many damnable errors: certainly damnable to them who were convicted of them, had they still persisted in them after their conviction; though perhaps pardonable (which is all that is acknowledged) to such as ignorantly continued in them: a church vainly arrogating, without possibility of proof, a perpetual succession of bishops, holding always the same doctrine; and with a ridiculous impudence pretending perpetual possession of the world; whereas the world knows, that a little before Luther's arising, your church was confined to a part of a part of it: lastly, a church vainly glorying in the dependance of other churches upon her, which yet she supports no more than those crouching antics, which seem in great buildings to labour under the weight they bear, do indeed support the fabric. For a corrupted and false church may give authority to preach the truth, and consequently against her own falsehoods and corruptions. Besides, a false church may preserve the Scripture true (as now the Old Testament is preserved by the Jews), either not being arrived to that height of impiety as to attempt the corruption of it, or not able to effect it, or not perceiving, or not regarding the opposition of it to her corruptions. And so we might receive from you lawful ordination, and true Scriptures, though you were a false church; and, receiving the Scriptures from you (though not from you alone), I hope you cannot hinder us, neither need we ask your leave, to believe and obey them. And this, though you be a false church, is enough to make us a true one. As for a succession of men that

held with us in all points of doctrine, it is a thing we need not, and you have as little as we. So that if we acknowledge that your church before Luther was a true church, it is not for any ends, for any dependance that we have upon you; but because we conceive, that in a charitable construction you may pass for a true church, such a church (and no better) as you do sometimes acknowledge protestants to be; that is, a company of men, wherein some ignorant souls may be saved. So that in this balancing of religion against religion, and church against church, it seems you have nothing of weight and moment to put into your scale; nothing but smoke and wind, vain shadows, and fantastical pretences. Yet if protestants, on the other side, had nothing to put in their scale but those negative commendations which you are pleased to afford them; nothing but, no unity, nor means to procure it; no farther extent, when Luther arose, than Luther's body; no universality of time or place; no visibility or being, except only in your church; no succession of persons or doctrine; no leader but Luther, in a quarrel begun upon no ground but passion; no church, no ordination, no Scriptures, but such as they received from you; if all this were true, and this were all that could be pleaded for protestants, possibly, with an allowance of three grains of partiality, your scale might seem to turn. But then, if it may appear, that part of these objections are falsely made against them, the rest vainly; that whatsoever of truth is in these imputations, is impertinent to this trial, and whatsoever is pertinent is untrue; and besides, that plenty of good matter may be alleged for protestants, which is

here dissembled: then, I hope, our cause may be good, notwithstanding these pretences.

55. I say then, that want of universality of time and place, the invisibility or not existence of the professors of protestant doctrine before Luther, Luther's being alone when he first opposed your church, our having our church, ordination, Scriptures, personal, and yet not doctrinal, succession from you, are vain and impertinent allegations, against the truth of our doctrine and church. That the entire truth of Christ, without any mixture of error, should be professed or believed in all places at any time, or in any place at all times, is not a thing evident in reason, neither have we any revelation for it. And, therefore, in relying so confidently on it, you build your house upon the sand. And what obligation we had, either to be so peevish, as to take nothing of yours, or so foolish as to take all, I do not understand. For whereas you say, that this is to be choosers, and therefore heretics; I tell you, that though all heretics are choosers, yet all choosers are not heretics; otherwise they also which choose your religion must be heretics. As for our wanting unity, and means of proving it, Luther's opposing your church upon mere passion, our following private men rather than the catholic church, the first and last are mere untruths; for we want not unity, nor means to procure it in things necessary. Plain places of Scripture, and such as need no interpreter, are our means to obtain it. Neither do we follow any private men, but only the Scripture, the word of God, as our rule; and reason, which is also the gift of God given to direct us in all our actions, in the use of this rule. And then for Luther's op-

posing your church upon mere passion, it is a thing I will not deny, because I know not his heart; and, for the same reason, you should not have affirmed it. Sure I am, whether he opposed your church upon reason or no, he had reason enough to oppose it. And, therefore, if he did it upon passion, we will follow him only in his action, and not in his passion; in his opposition, not in the manner of it: and then, I presume, you will have no reason to condemn us, unless you will say that a good action cannot be done with reason, because somebody before us hath done it upon passion. You see, then, how imprudent you have been in the choice of your arguments, to prove protestants unwise in the choice of their religion.

56. It remains now, that I should shew that many reasons of moment may be alleged for the justification of protestants, which are dissembled by you, and not put into the balance. Know then, Sir, that when I say the religion of protestants is in prudence to be preferred before yours, as, on the one side, I do not understand by your religion the doctrine of Bellarmine, or Baronius, or any other private man amongst you; nor the doctrine of the Sorbonne, or of the Jesuits, or of the Dominicans, or of any other particular company among you, but that wherein you all agree, or profess to agree—the doctrine of the council of Trent; so accordingly, on the other side, by the religion of protestants, I do not understand the doctrine of Luther, or Calvin, or Melancthon; nor the Confession of Augusta, or Geneva, nor the Catechism of Heidelberg, nor the Articles of the church of England, no nor the harmony of protestant confessions; but that wherein they all agree,

and which they all subscribe with a greater harmony, as a perfect rule of their faith and actions; that is, the Bible. The Bible, I say, the Bible only, is the religion of protestants! Whatsoever else they believe besides it, and the plain irrefragable, indubitable consequences of it, well may they hold it as a matter of opinion: but as matter of faith and religion, neither can they with coherence to their own grounds believe it themselves, nor require the belief of it of others, without most high and most schismatical presumption. I, for my part, after a long, and (as I verily believe and hope) impartial search of the true way to eternal happiness, do profess plainly, that I cannot find any rest for the sole of my foot but upon this rock only. I see plainly, and with mine own eyes, that there are popes against popes, councils against councils, some fathers against others, the same fathers against themselves, a consent of fathers of one age against a consent of fathers of another age, the church of one age against the church of another age. Traditive interpretations of Scripture are pretended; but there are few or none to be found: no tradition, but only of Scripture, can derive itself from the fountain, but may be plainly proved, either to have been brought in, in such an age after Christ, or that in such an age it was not in. In a word, there is no sufficient certainty but of Scripture only, for any considering man to build upon. This therefore, and this only, I have reason to believe; this I will profess; according to this I will live; and for this, if there be occasion, I will not only willingly, but even gladly, lose my life, though I should be sorry that Christians should take it from me. Propose me

any thing out of this book, and require whether I believe it or no, and seem it never so incomprehensible to human reason, I will subscribe it with hand and heart, as knowing no demonstration can be stronger than this—God hath said so, therefore it is true. In other things I will take no man's liberty of judgment from him; neither shall any man take mine from me. I will think no man the worse man, nor the worse Christian, I will love no man the less, for differing in opinion from me. And what measure I mete to others, I expect from them again. I am fully assured that God does not, and therefore that men ought not, to require any more of any man than this—to believe the Scripture to be God's word, to endeavour to find the true sense of it, and to live according to it.

57. This is the religion which I have chosen after a long deliberation, and I am verily persuaded that I have chosen wisely, much more wisely than if I had guided myself according to your church's authority. For the Scripture being all true, I am secured, by believing nothing else, that I shall believe no falsehood as matter of faith. And if I mistake the sense of Scripture, and so fall into error, yet I am secure from any danger thereby, if but your grounds be true; because, endeavouring to find the true sense of Scripture, I cannot but hold my error without pertinacy, and be ready to forsake it, when a more true and more probable sense shall appear unto me. And then all necessary truth being, as I have proved, plainly set down in Scripture, I am certain by believing Scripture to believe all necessary truth: and he that does so, if his life be answerable to

his faith, how is it possible he should fail of salvation?

58. Besides, whatsoever may be pretended to gain to your church the credit of a guide, all that and much more may be said for the Scripture. Hath your church been ancient? The Scripture is more ancient. Is your church a means to keep men at unity? So is the Scripture, to keep those that believe it, and will obey it, in unity of belief, in matters necessary or very profitable; and in unity of charity, in points unnecessary. Is your church universal for time or place? Certainly the Scripture is more universal: for all the Christians in the world (those, I mean, that in truth deserve this name) do now and always have believed the Scripture to be the word of God, so much of it, at least, as contains all things necessary; whereas only you say, that you only are the church of God, and all Christians besides you deny it.

59. Thirdly, Following the Scripture, I follow that whereby you prove your church's infallibility, (whereof, were it not for Scripture, what pretence could you have, or what notion could we have?) and by so doing tacitly confess, that yourselves are surer of the truth of the Scripture than of your church's authority: for we must be surer of the proof than of the thing proved, otherwise it is no proof.

60. Fourthly, Following the Scripture, I follow that which must be true, if your church be true; for your church gives attestation to it: whereas, if I follow your church, I must follow that, which, though Scripture be true, may be false, nay, which, if Scripture be true, must be false, because the Scripture testifies against it.

61. Fifthly, To follow the Scripture, I have God's express warrant and command, and no colour of any prohibition: but to believe your church infallible, I have no command at all, much less an express command. Nay, I have reason to fear, that I am prohibited to do so in these words: 'Call no man master on the earth: they fell by infidelity; thou standest by faith: be not high-minded, but fear: the Spirit of truth the world cannot receive."

62. Following your church, I must hold many things not only above reason, but against it, if any thing be against it; whereas, following the Scripture, I shall believe many mysteries, but no impossibilities; many things above reason, but nothing against it; many things, which, had they not been revealed, reason could never have discovered, but nothing which by true reason may be confuted; many things, which reason cannot comprehend how they can be, but nothing which reason can comprehend that it cannot be. Nay, I shall believe nothing which reason will not convince that I ought to believe it: for reason will convince any man, unless he be of a perverse mind, that the Scripture is the word of God: and then no reason can be greater than this; God says so, therefore it is true.

63. Following your church, I must hold many things, which to any man's judgment, that will give himself the liberty of judgment, will seem much more contradicted by Scripture, than the infallibility of your church appears to be confirmed by it; and consequently, must be so foolish as to believe your church exempted from error upon less evidence, rather than subject to the com-

mon condition of mankind upon greater evidence. Now, if I take the Scripture only for my guide, I shall not need to do any thing so unreasonable.

64. If I will follow your church, I must believe impossibilities, and that with an absolute certainty, upon motives which are confessed to be but only prudential and probable; that is, with a weak foundation, I must firmly support a heavy, a monstrous heavy building: now following the Scripture, I shall have no necessity to undergo any such difficulties.

65. Following your church, I must be a servant of Christ, and a subject of the king, but only *ad placitum papæ*. I must be prepared in mind to renounce my allegiance to the king, when the pope shall declare him a heretic, and command me not to obey him; and I must be prepared in mind to esteem virtue vice, and vice virtue, if the pope shall so determine. Indeed, you say, it is impossible he should do the latter; but that you know is a great question, neither is it fit my obedience to God and the king should depend upon

without any assistance from worldly power, wit, or policy, nay, against all the power and policy of the world, prevailed and enlarged itself in a very short time all the world over; whereas it is too apparent, that your church hath got, and still maintains, her authority over men's consciences, by counterfeiting false miracles, forging false stories, by obtruding on the world supposititious writings, by corrupting the monuments of former times, and defacing out of them all which any way makes against you, by wars, by persecutions, by massacres, by treasons, by rebellions; in short, by all manner of carnal means, whether violent or fraudulent.

67. Following the Scripture, I shall believe a religion, the first preachers and professors whereof, it is most certain, they could have no worldly ends upon the world; that they should not project to themselves by it any of the profits, or honours, or pleasures, of this world: but rather were to expect the contrary, even all the miseries which the world could lay upon them. On the other side, the head of your church, the pretended successor of the apostles, and guide of faith, it is even palpable, that he makes your religion the instrument of his ambition, and by it seeks to entitle himself directly or indirectly to the monarchy of the world. And besides it is evident to any man, that has but half an eye, that most of those doctrines which you add to the Scripture, do make, one way or other, for the honour or temporal profit of the teachers of them.

68. Following the Scripture only, I shall embrace a religion of admirable simplicity, consisting in a manner wholly in the worship of God, in

spirit, and in truth: whereas your church and doctrine is even loaded with an infinity of weak, childish, ridiculous, unsavoury, superstitions and ceremonies, and full of that righteousness for which Christ shall judge the world.

69. Following the Scriptures, I shall believe that which universal, never-failing, tradition assures me, that it was by the admirable supernatural works of God confirmed to be the word of God; whereas never any miracle was wrought, never so much as a lame horse cured, in confirmation of your church's authority and infallibility. And if any strange things have been done, which may seem to give attestation to some parts of your doctrine, yet this proves nothing but the truth of the Scripture, which foretold that (God's providence permitting it, and the wickedness of the world deserving it) strange signs and wonders should be wrought to confirm false doctrine, that they which love not the truth may be given over to strong delusions. Neither does it seem to me any strange thing, that God should permit some true wonders to be done, to delude them who have forged so many to deceive the world.

70. If I follow the Scripture, I must not promise myself salvation without effectual dereliction and mortification of all vices, and the effectual practice of all Christian virtues: but your church opens an easier and a broader way to heaven, and though I continue all my life long in a course of sin, and without the practice of any virtue, yet gives me assurance that I may be let into heaven at a postern-gate, even by an act of attrition at the hour of death, if it be joined with confession, or by an act of contrition without confession.

71. Admirable are the precepts of piety and humility, of innocence and patience, of liberality, frugality, temperance, sobriety, justice, meekness, fortitude, constancy, and gravity, contempt of the world, love of God, and the love of mankind; in a word, of all virtues, and against all vice, which the Scriptures impose upon us, to be obeyed under pain of damnation: the sum whereof is in a manner comprised in our Saviour's sermon on the Mount, recorded in the 5th, 6th, and 7th of St. Matthew, which, if they were generally obeyed, could not but make the world generally happy, and the goodness of them alone were sufficient to make any wise and good man believe, that this religion, rather than any other, came from God, the fountain of all goodness. And that they may be generally obeyed, our Saviour hath ratified them all in the close of his sermon, with these universal sanctions: "Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom, but he that doth the will of my Father which is in heaven." And again, "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and it fell, and great was the fall thereof." Now your church, notwithstanding all this, enervates, and in a manner dissolves and abrogates many of these precepts, teaching men that they are not laws for all Christians, but counsels of perfection, and matters of supererogation: that a man shall do well, if he do observe them; but he shall not sin, if he observe them not; that they are for them who aim at high places in heaven, who aspire with the two sons of Zebedee to

the right hand, or to the left hand of Christ: but if a man will be content barely to go to heaven, and to be a door-keeper in the house of God, especially if he will be content to taste of purgatory in the way, he may attain it at an easier purchase. Therefore the religion of your church is not so holy nor so good as the doctrine of Christ delivered in Scripture, and therefore not so likely to come from the Fountain of holiness and goodness.

72. Lastly, If I follow your church for my guide, I shall do all one as if I should follow a company of blind men in a judgment of colours, or in the choice of a way. For every unconsidering man is blind in that which he does not consider. Now what is your church but a company of unconsidering men, who comfort themselves because they are a great company together? but all of them, either out of idleness, refuse the trouble of a severe trial of their religion (as if heaven were not worth it), or out of superstition fear the event of such a trial, that they may be scrupled, and staggered, and disquieted by it; and, therefore, for the most part, do it not at all: or, if they do, they do it negligently and hypocritically, and perfunctorily, rather for the satisfaction of others than themselves; but certainly without indifference, without liberty of judgment, without a resolution to doubt of it, if, upon examination, the grounds of it prove uncertain, or to leave it, if they prove apparently false. My own experience assures me, that in this imputation I do you no injury; but it is very apparent to all men from your ranking doubting of any part of your doctrine among mortal sins. For from hence it follows, that seeing every man must resolve, that he will never com-

mit mortal sin, that he must never examine the grounds of it at all, for fear he should be moved to doubt; or if he do, he must resolve, that no motives, be they never so strong, shall move him to doubt, but that, with his will and resolution, he will uphold himself in a firm belief of your religion, though his reason and his understanding fail him. And seeing this is the condition of all those whom you esteem good catholics, who can deny, but you are a company of men unwilling and afraid to understand, lest you should do good! That have eyes to see, and will not see, that have not the love of truth, (which is only to be known by an indifferent trial) and therefore deserve to be given over to strong delusions; men that love darkness more than light: in a word, that you are the blind leading the blind; and what prudence there can be in following such guides, our Saviour hath taught us in saying, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

73. There remain unspoken to in this section, some places out of St. Augustine, and some sayings of Luther, wherein he confesses that in the papacy are many good things: but for the former, I have already considered, and returned the argument grounded on them. As for Luther's speeches, I told you not long since, we follow no private men, and regard not much what he says either against the church of Rome, or for it, but what he proves. He was a man of a vehement spirit, and very often what he took in hand he did not do it, but overdo it. He that will justify all his speeches, especially such as he wrote in heat of opposition, I believe will have work enough. Yet in these sentences, though he overreach in the particulars, yet what he says in general we confess true, and con-

fess with him, that in the papacy are many good things, which have come from them to us; but withal we say, there are many bad, neither do we think ourselves bound in prudence either to reject the good with the bad, or to retain the bad with the good; but rather conceive it a high point of wisdom—to separate between the precious and the vile, to sever the good from the bad, and to put the good in vessels to be kept, and to cast the bad away; to try all things, and to hold that which is good.

74. Ad §. 32. Your next and last argument against the faith of protestants is—because wanting certainty and prudence, it must also want the fourth condition, *supernaturality*. For that being a human persuasion, it is not in the essence of it supernatural; and being imprudent and rash, it cannot proceed from Divine motion, and so is not supernatural in respect of the cause from which it proceedeth.—*Ans.* This little discourse stands wholly upon what went before, and therefore must fall together with it. I have proved the faith of protestants as certain and as prudent as the faith of papists; and, therefore, if these be certain grounds of supernaturality, our faith may have it as well as yours. I would here furthermore be informed, how you can assure us, that your faith is not your persuasion or opinion, (for you make them all one) that your church's doctrine is true? Or, if you grant it your persuasion, why is it not the persuasion of men, and in respect of the subject of it, a human persuasion? I desire also to know, what sense there is in pretending that your persuasion is, not in regard of the object only and cause of it, but in the nature or essence of it, supernatural? Lastly, Whereas you say—that being imprudent, it cannot come from Divine motion;

certainly, by this reason, all they that believe your own religion, and cannot give a wise and sufficient reason for it, (as millions amongst you cannot) must be condemned to have no supernatural faith: or, if not, then, without question, nothing can hinder, but that the imprudent faith of protestants may proceed from Divine motion, as well as the imprudent faith of papists.

75. And thus having weighed your whole discourse, and found it altogether lighter than vanity, why should I not invert your conclusion, and say, Seeing you have not proved, that whosoever errs against any one point of faith loseth all Divine faith; nor that any error whatsoever, concerning that which by the parties litigant may be esteemed a matter of faith, is a grievous sin, it follows not at all, that when two men hold different doctrines concerning religion, that but one can be saved? Not that I deny but that the sentence of St. Chrysostome, with which you conclude this chapter, may, in a good sense, be true; for oftimes by the faith is meant only that doctrine which is necessary to salvation; and to say, that salvation may be had without any the least thing which is necessary to salvation, implies a repugnance, and destroys itself. Besides, not to believe all necessary points, and to believe none at all, is for the purpose of salvation all one; and therefore he that does so, may justly be said to destroy the gospel of Christ, seeing he makes it ineffectual to the end for which it was intended, the salvation of men's souls. But why you should conceive that all differences about religion are concerning matters of faith, in this high notion of the word, for that I conceive no reason.

CHAP. VII.

In regard of the precept of charity towards one's self, protestants are in a state of sin, as long as they remain separated from the Roman church.

1. "THAT due order is to be observed in the theological virtue of charity, whereby we are directed to prefer some objects before others, is a truth taught by all divines, and declared in these words of Holy Scripture; 'He hath ordered* charity in me.' The reason whereof is, because the infinite goodness of God, which is the formal object or motive of charity, and for which all other things are loved, is differently participated by different objects; and therefore, the love we bear to them for God's sake, must accordingly be unequal. In the virtue of faith, the case is far otherwise; because all the objects or points, which we believe, do equally participate the Divine testimony or revelation, for which we believe alike all things propounded for such. For it is as impossible for God to speak an untruth in a small as in a great matter. And this is the ground for which we have so often affirmed, that any least error against faith is injurious to God, and destructive of salvation.

2. "This order in charity may be considered, towards God, our own soul, the soul of our neighbour, our own life or goods, and the life or goods of our neighbour. God is to be beloved above all

* Cant. ii. 4.

things, both *objective*, (as the divines speak) that is, we must wish or desire to God a good more great, perfect, and noble, than to any or all other things; namely, all that indeed he is, a nature infinite, independent, immense, &c. and also *appretiative*, that is, that we must sooner lose what good soever than leave and abandon him. In the other objects of charity, of which I spake, this order is to be kept: we may, but are not bound, to prefer the life and goods of our neighbour before our own: we are bound to prefer the soul of our neighbour before our own temporal goods or life, if he happen to be in extreme spiritual necessity, and that we by our assistance can succour him, according to the saying of St. John, 'In this we have known * the charity of God, because he hath yielded his life for us, and we ought to yield our life for our brethren.' And St. Augustine likewise saith, 'A Christian will not doubt † to lose his own temporal life, for the eternal life of his neighbour.' Lastly, We are to prefer the spiritual good of our own soul, before both the spiritual and temporal good of our neighbour, because as charity doth of its own nature chiefly incline the person, in whom it resides, to love God, and to be united with him, so of itself it inclines him to procure those things whereby the said union with God is effected, rather to himself than to others. And from hence it follows, that in things necessary to salvation, no man ought in any case, or in any respect whatsoever, to prefer the spiritual good, either of any particular person, or of the whole world, before his own soul, according to those

* 1 John iii. 16.

† De mendac. c. vi.

words of our blessed Saviour, 'What doth it * avail a man, if he gain the whole world, and sustain the damage of his own soul?' And therefore (to come to our present purpose) it is directly against the order of charity, or against charity, as it hath a reference to ourselves, which divines call *charitas propria*, to adventure either the omitting of any means necessary to salvation, or the committing of any thing repugnant to it, for whatsoever respect; and consequently, if by living out of the Roman church we put ourselves in hazard either to want something necessarily required to salvation, or else to perform some act against it, we commit a most grievous sin against the virtue of charity as it respects ourselves, and so cannot hope for salvation without repentance.

3. " Now of things necessary to salvation, there are two sorts, according to the doctrine of all divines. Some things (say they) are necessary to salvation, *necessitate præcepti*, necessary only because they are commanded; for, 'If thou wilt † enter into life, keep the commandments.' In which kind of things, as probable ignorance of the law, or of the commandment, doth excuse the party from all faulty breach thereof; so likewise doth it not exclude salvation, in case of ignorance. Some other things are said to be necessary to salvation, *necessitate medii, finis* or *salutis;* because they are means appointed by God to attain our end of eternal salvation, in so strict a manner, that it were presumption to hope for salvation without them. And as the former means are said to be necessary, because they are command-

* Matt. vi. † Matt. xix. 17.

ed, so the latter are commonly said to be commanded, because they are necessary; that is, although there were no other special precept concerning them, yet supposing they be once appointed as means absolutely necessary to salvation, there cannot but arise an obligation of procuring to have them, in virtue of that universal precept of charity, which obligeth every man to procure the salvation of his own soul. In this sort, Divine infallible faith is necessary to salvation; as likewise repentance of every deadly sin, and in the doctrine of catholics, baptism *in re*, that is, in act, to children, and for those who are come to the use of reason, *in voto*, or hearty desire, when they cannot have it in act. And as baptism is necessary for remission of original and actual sin committed before it, so the sacrament of confession or penance is necessary *in re*, or *in voto*, in act or desire, for the remission of mortal sins, committed after baptism. The minister of which sacrament of penance being necessarily a true priest, true ordination is necessary in the church of God for remission of sins by this sacrament, as also for other ends not belonging to our present purpose. From hence it riseth, that no ignorance or impossibility can supply the want of those means which are absolutely necessary to salvation. As if, for example, a sinner depart this world without repenting himself of all deadly sins, although he die suddenly, or unexpectedly fall out of his wits, and so commit no new sin by omission of repentance; yet he shall be eternally punished for his former sins committed, and never repented of. If an infant die without baptism, he cannot be saved; not by reason of any actual sin committed by him in

omitting baptism, but for original sin, not forgiven by the means which God hath ordained to that purpose. Which doctrine all, or most, protestants will (for aught I know) grant to be true, in the children of infidels; yea, not only Lutherans, but also some other protestants, as Mr. Bilson, late of Winchester, * and others, hold it to be true, even in the children of the faithful. And if protestants in general disagree from catholics in this point, it cannot be denied, but that our disagreement is in a point very fundamental. And the like I say of the sacrament of penance, which they deny to be necessary to salvation, either in act, or in desire: which error is likewise fundamental, because it concerns (as I said) a thing necessary to salvation: and, for the same reason, if their priesthood and ordination be doubtful, as certainly it is, they are in danger to want a means, without which they cannot be saved. Neither ought this rigour to seem strange or unjust: for Almighty God having, of his own goodness, without our merit, first ordained man to a supernatural end of eternal felicity; and then, after our fall in Adam, vouchsafed to reduce us to the attaining of that end, if his blessed will be pleased to limit the attaining of that end, to some means, which in his infinite wisdom he thinks most fit; who can say, Why dost thou so? Or who can hope for that end without such means? Blessed be his Divine Majesty, for vouchsafing to ordain us, base creatures, to so sublime an end, by any means at all!

4. "Out of the aforesaid difference followeth another, that (generally speaking) in things neces-

* In his True Difference, &c. part iv. p. 368, 369.

sary only, because they are commanded, it is sufficient for avoiding sin, that we proceed prudently, and by the conduct of some probable opinion, maturely weighed and approved by men of virtue, learning, and wisdom. Neither are we always obliged to follow the most strict, and severe, or secure part, as long as the doctrine which we embrace proceeds upon such reasons, as may warrant it to be truly probable and prudent, though the contrary part want not also probable grounds. For, in human affairs and discourse, evidence and certainty cannot be always expected: but when we treat not precisely of avoiding sin, but moreover of procuring something, without which I cannot be saved; I am obliged by the law and order of charity, to procure as great certainty as morally I am able, and am not to follow every probable opinion or dictamen, but *tutiorem partem*, the safer part; because, if my probability prove false, I shall not probably, but certainly, come short of salvation. Nay, in such a case, I shall incur a new sin against the virtue of charity towards myself, which obligeth every one not to expose his soul to the hazard of eternal perdition, when it is in his power, with the assistance of God's grace, to make the matter sure. From this very ground it is, that although some divines be of opinion, that it is not a sin to use some matter or form of sacraments only probable, if we respect precisely the reverence or respect which is due to sacraments, as they belong to the moral infused virtue of religion; yet when they are such sacraments, as the invalidity thereof may endanger the salvation of souls, all do with one consent agree, that it is a grievous offence to use a doubt-

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5. " Now that protestants have r
to doubt, in what case they stand, is
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infallibility of the church, and of he
of controversies, to whom all Chris
submit their judgment (as even son
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Moreover, as I said heretofore, since it is granted, that every error in fundamental points is damnable, and that they cannot tell in particular what points be fundamental, it follows, that none of them knows, whether he or his brethren do not err damnably, it being certain, that among so many disagreeing persons some must err. Upon the same ground of not being able to assign what points be fundamental, I say, they cannot be sure whether the difference among them be fundamental, or no; and, consequently, whether they agree in the substance of faith, and hope of salvation. I omit to add, that you want the sacrament of penance, instituted for remission of sins; or at least you must confess, that you hold it not necessary; and yet, your own brethren, for example, the century writers, do * acknowledge, that in the times of Cyprian and Tertullian, private confession, even of thoughts, was used; and that it was then commanded and thought necessary. The like, I say, concerning your ordination, which at least is very doubtful; and, consequently, all that depends thereon.

6. " On the other side, that the Roman church is the safer way to heaven, (not to repeat what hath been already said upon divers occasions) I will again put you in mind, that unless the Roman church was the true church, there was no visible church upon the earth: a thing so manifest, that protestants themselves confess, that for more than one thousand years the Roman church possessed the whole world, as we have shewed heretofore out of their own † words: from whence it follows,

* Cont. 3. c. vi. col. 127. † Chap. v. Num. 9.

that unless ours be the true church, you cannot pretend to any perpetual visible church of your own; but ours doth not depend on yours, before which it was. And here I wish you to consider, with fear and trembling, how all Roman catholics, not one excepted, that is, those very men whom you must hold not to err damnably in their belief, unless you will destroy your own church and salvation, do with unanimous consent believe and profess, that protestancy unrepented destroys salvation; and then tell me, as you will answer at the last day, whether it be not more safe to live and die in that church, which even yourselves are forced to acknowledge not to be cut off from hope of salvation (which are your own words), than to live in a church which the said confessedly true church doth firmly believe, and constantly profess not to be capable of salvation. And therefore I conclude, that by the most strict obligation of charity towards your own soul, you are bound to place it in safety, by returning to that church, from which your progenitors schismatically departed, lest too late you find that saying of the Holy Ghost verified in yourselves; "He that loves * the danger, shall perish therein."

7. "Against this last argument of the greater security of the Roman church, drawn from your own confession, you bring an objection, which in the end will be found to make for us against yourself. It is taken from the words of the Donatists, speaking of catholics in this manner:—Yourselves confess † our baptism, sacraments, and faith (here you put an explication of your own, and say, *for*

* Eccl. iii. 27. † Page 112.

the most part, as if any small error in faith did not destroy all faith), to be good and available. We deny yours to be so, and say, there is no church, no salvation among you; therefore, it is safest for all to join with us.

8. "By your leave, our argument is not (as you say) for simple people alone; but for all them, who have care to save their souls. Neither is it grounded upon your charitable judgment (as you* speak) but upon an inevitable necessity for you either to grant salvation to our church, or to entail certain damnation upon your own; because yours can have no being till Luther, unless ours be supposed to have been the true church of Christ. And, since you term this argument a charm, take heed you be none of those, who, according to the prophet David, do not hear the 'voice of him* who charmeth wisely.' But, to come to the purpose: catholics never granted, that the Donatists had a true church, or might be saved: and, therefore, you, having cited out of St. Augustine the words of the catholics, that the Donatists had true baptism, when you come to the contrary words of the Donatists, you add, 'No church, no salvation;' making the argument to have *quinque terminos*, without which addition you did see it made nothing against us: for, as I said, the catholics never yielded, that among the Donatists there was a true church, or hope of salvation. And yourself, a few leaves after, acknowledge—that the Donatists maintained an error, which was in the matter and nature of it properly heretical, against that article of the Creed, wherein we profess to believe

* Page 81. * Psal. lvii. 6.

the holy * catholic church—and, consequently, you cannot allow salvation to them, as you do, and must do, to us. And, therefore, the Donatists could not make the like argument against catholics, as catholics make against you, who grant us salvation, which we deny to you. But, at least (you will say) this argument for the certainty of their baptism was like to ours, touching the security and certainty of our salvation; and, therefore, that catholics should have esteemed the baptism of the Donatists more certain than their own, and so have allowed rebaptization of such as were baptized by heretics or sinners, as the Donatists esteemed all catholics to be. I answer, No; because it being a matter of faith, that baptism, administered by heretics, observing due matter, form, &c. is valid; to rebaptize any, so baptized, had been both a sacrilege in reiterating a sacrament not reiterable, and a profession also of a damnable heresy; and therefore had not been more safe, but certainly damnable. But you confess, that, in the doctrine or practice of the Roman church, there is no belief or profession of any damnable error, which if there were, even your church should certainly be no church. To believe, therefore, and profess as we do, cannot exclude salvation, as rebaptization must have done. But if the Donatists could have affirmed with truth, that in the opinion both of catholics and themselves, their baptism was good; yea, and good in such sort, as that, unless theirs was good, that of the catholics could not be such; but theirs might be good, though that of the catholics were not;

* Page 126.

and further, that it was no damnable error to believe, that baptism administered by the catholics was not good, nor that it was any sacrilege to reiterate the same baptism of catholics: if, I say, they could have truly affirmed these things, they had said somewhat, which at least had seemed to the purpose. But these things they could not say with any colour of truth, and therefore, their argument was fond and impious. But we with truth say to protestants, You cannot but confess, that our doctrine contains no damnable error, and that our church is so certainly a true church, that unless ours be true, you cannot pretend any: yea, you grant, that you should be guilty of schism, if you did cut off our church from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation. But we neither do nor can grant, that yours is a true church, or that within it there is hope of salvation: therefore it is safest for you to join with us. And now against whom hath your objection greatest force?

9. "But I wonder not a little, and so I think will every body else, what the reason may be, that you do not so much as go about to answer the argument of the Donatists, which you say is all one with ours, but refer us to St. Augustine, there to read it; as if every one carried with him a library, or were able to examine the place in St. Augustine: and yet you might be sure your reader would be greedy to see some solid answer to an argument so often urged by us, and which, indeed, unless you can confute it, ought alone to move every one that hath care of his soul, to take the safest way, by incorporating himself in our church. But we may easily ima-

gine the true reason of your silence; for the answer which St. Augustine gives to the Donatists, is directly against yourself, and the same which I have given, namely, that catholics * approve the baptism of Donatists, but abhor their heresy of rebaptization. And that, as gold is good (which is the similitude used by † St. Augustine), yet not to be sought in company of thieves; so, though baptism be good, yet it must not be sought for in the conventicles of Donatists. But you free us from damnable heresy, and yield us salvation, which I hope is to be embraced in whatsoever company it is found; or rather, that company is to be embraced before all other, in which all sides agree that salvation may be found. We therefore must infer, that it is safest for you to seek salvation among us. You had good reason to conceal St. Augustine's answer to the Donatists.

10. "You frame another argument in our behalf, and make us speak thus: 'If protestants believe* the religion of catholics to be a safe way to heaven, why do they not follow it?' Which wise argument of your own, you answer at large, and confirm your answer by this instance: 'The Jesuits and Dominicans hold different opinions touching predetermination, and the immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin; yet so, that the Jesuits hold the Dominican's way safe, that is, their error not damnable; and the Dominicans hold the same of the Jesuits; yet neither of them with good consequence can press the other to believe his opinion, because, by his own confession, it is no damnable error.

* Ad lit. Petil. l. ii. c. cviii. † Contra Cresc. l. i. c. xxi.
‡ Page 79.

11. "But what catholic maketh such a wise demand as you put into our mouths? If our religion be a safe way to heaven, that is, not damnable, why do you not follow it? As if every thing that is good must be of necessity embraced by every body! But what think you of the argument framed thus? Our religion is safe even by your confession; therefore you ought to grant, that all may embrace it. And yet further, thus? Among different religions and contrary ways to heaven, one only can be safe: but ours, by your own confession, is safe, whereas we hold, that in yours there is no hope of salvation; therefore you may and ought to embrace ours. This is our argument. And if the Dominicans and Jesuits did say one to another, as we say to you; then one of them might with good consequence press the other to believe his opinion. You have still the hard fortune to be beat with your own weapon.

12. "It remaineth, then, that both in regard of faith and charity, protestants are obliged to unite themselves with the church of Rome. And I may add also, in regard of the theological virtue of hope, without which none can hope to be saved, and which you want, either by excess of confidence, or defect by despair, not unlike to your faith, which I shewed either to be deficient in certainty, or excessive in evidence; as likewise, according to the rigid Calvinists, it is either so strong, that, once had, it can never be lost; or so more than weak, and so much nothing, that it can never be gotten. For the true theological hope of Christians, is a hope which keeps a mean between presumption and desperation, which moves us to work our salvation with fear and trembling, which

conducts us to make sure our salvation by good works, as holy Scripture adviseth: but, contrarily, protestants do either exclude hope by despair, with the doctrine, that our Saviour died not for all, and that such want grace sufficient to salvation; or else by vain presumption, grounded upon a fantastical persuasion, that they are predestinate; which faith must exclude all fear and trembling. Neither can they make their calling certain by good works, who do certainly believe, that before any good works they are justified, and justified even by faith alone, and by that faith, whereby they certainly believe that they are justified. Which points some protestants do expressly affirm to be the soul of the church, the principal origin of salvation, of all other points of doctrine the chiefest and weightiest, as already I have noted, chap. iii. n. 19. And if some protestants do now relent from the rigour of the aforesaid doctrine, we must affirm, that at least some of them want the theological virtue of hope; yea, that none of them can have true hope, while they hope to be saved in the communion of those who defend such doctrines, as do directly overthrow all true Christian hope. And forasmuch as concerns faith, we must also infer, that they want unity therein, (and consequently have none at all) by their disagreement about the soul of the church, the principal origin of salvation, of all other points of doctrine the chiefest and weightiest. And, if you want true faith, you must by consequence want hope: or if you hold, that this point is not to be so indivisible on either side, but that it hath latitude sufficient to embrace all parties, without prejudice to their salvation; notwith-

standing that your brethren hold it to be the soul of the church, &c. I must repeat what I have said heretofore, that even by this example it is clear, you cannot agree what points be fundamental. And so (to whatsoever answer you fly) I press you in the same manner, and say, that you have no certainty, whether you agree in fundamental points, or unity and substance of faith, which cannot stand with difference in fundamentals. And so, upon the whole matter, I leave it to be considered, whether want of charity can be justly charged on us, because we affirm, that they cannot (without repentance) be saved, who want of all other the most necessary means to salvation, which are the three theological virtues, Faith, Hope, and Charity.

13. "And now I end this first part, having, as I conceive, complied with my first design (in that measure which time, commodity, scarcity of books, and my own small abilities, could afford), which was to shew, that amongst men of different religions one side can only be saved. For, since there must be some infallible means to decide all controversies concerning religion, and to propound truths revealed by Almighty God; and this means can be no other but the visible church of Christ, which at the time of Luther's appearance was only the church of Rome, and such as agreed with her; we must conclude, that whosoever opposeth himself to her definitions, or forsaketh her communion, doth resist God himself, whose spouse she is, and whose Divine truth she propounds; and therefore becomes guilty of schism and heresy, which since Luther, his associates, and protestants have done, and still continue to do, it is not

want of charity, but abundance of evident cause; that forceth us to declare this necessary truth—*Protestancy unrepented destroys salvation.*"

THE

ANSWER TO THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

That protestants are not bound by the charity which they owe to themselves to re-unite themselves to the Roman church.

THE first four paragraphs of this chapter are wholly spent in an unnecessary introduction unto a truth, which I presume never was, nor will be, by any man in his right wits, either denied or questioned; and that is—that every man, in wisdom and charity to himself, is to take the safest way to his eternal salvation.

2. The fifth and sixth are nothing, in a manner, but references to discourses already answered by me, and confuted in their proper places.

3. The seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh, have no other foundation but this false pretence—that we confess the Roman church free from damnable error.

4. In the twelfth, there is something that has some probability to persuade some protestants to forsake some of their opinions, or others to leave their communion; but to prove protestants in general to be in the state of sin, while they remain separate from the Roman church, there is not one word or syllable. And, besides, whatsoever argu-

ment there is in it for any purpose, it may as forcibly be returned upon papists, as it is urged against protestants; inasmuch as all papists either hold the doctrine of predetermination, and absolute election, or communicate with those that do hold it. Now from this doctrine, what is more plain and obvious, than for every natural man (without God's especial preventing grace) to make this practical collection? Either I am elected, or not elected; but if I be, no impiety possible can ever damn me; if not, no possible industry can ever save me. Now, whether this disjunctive persuasion be not as likely, as any doctrine of any protestants, to extinguish Christian hope, and filial fear, and to lead some men to despair, others to presumption, all to a wretchless and impious life, I desire you ingenuously to inform me? And, if you deny it, assure yourself you shall be contradicted and confuted by men of your own religion, and your own society, and taught at length this charitable doctrine, that though men's opinions may be charged with the absurd consequences which naturally flow from them, yet the men themselves are not; I mean, if they perceive not the consequence of these absurdities, nor do not own and acknowledge, but disclaim and detest them. And this is all the answer which I should make to this discourse, if I should deal rigidly and strictly with you. Yet, that you may not think yourself contemned, nor have occasion to pretend, that your arguments are evaded, I will intreat leave of my reader to bring to the test every particle of it, and to censure what deserves a censure, and to answer what may any way seem to require an answer; and then, I doubt not, but

what I have affirmed in general, will appear in particular.

5. Ad §. 1. To the first, then, I say, 1. It was needless to prove, that due order is to be observed in any thing, much more in charity, which, being one of the best things, may be spoiled by being disordered: yet, if it stood in need of proof, I fear this place of the Canticles, " He hath ordered charity in me," would be no enforcing demonstration of it. 2. The reason alleged by you why we ought to love one object more than another, because one thing participates the Divine goodness more than another, is fantastical, and repugnant to what you say presently after: for, by this rule, no man should love himself more than all the world, which yet you require, unless he were first vainly persuaded, that he doth more participate the Divine goodness than all the world. But the true reason why one thing ought to be loved more than another is, because one thing is better than another, or because it is better to us, or because God commands us to do so, or because God himself does so, and we are to conform our affections to the will of God. 3. It is not true, that all objects, which we believe, do equally participate the Divine testimony or revelation: for some are testified more evidently, and some more obscurely; and, therefore, whatsoever you have built upon this ground, must of necessity fall together with it. And thus much for the first number.

6. Ad §. 2. In the second, many passages deserve a censure: for, 1. It is not true, that we are to wish or desire to God a nature infinite, independent, immense; for it is impossible I should

desire to any person that which he hath already, if I know that he hath it; nor the perpetuity of it, if I know it impossible but he must have it for perpetuity. And therefore, rejoicing only, and not well-wishing, is here the proper work of love. 2. Whereas you say, that—in things necessary to salvation no man ought in any case, or in any respect whatsoever, to prefer the spiritual good of the whole world before his own soul.—In saying this, you seem to me to condemn one of the greatest acts of charity, of one of the greatest saints that ever was; I mean St. Paul, who for his brethren desired to be an anathema from Christ. And as for the text alleged by you in confirmation of your saying, "What doth it avail a man, if he gain the whole world, and sustain the damage of his own soul?" it is nothing to the purpose: for, without all question, it is not profitable for a man to do so; but the question is, Whether it be not lawful for a man to forego, and part with, his own particular profit, to procure the universal, spiritual, and eternal benefit of others? 3. Whereas you say—It is directly against charity to ourselves, to adventure the omitting of any means necessary to salvation. This is true: but so is this also; that it is directly against the same charity, to adventure the omitting of any thing, that may any way help or conduce to my salvation, that may make the way to it more secure, or less dangerous. And, therefore, if the errors of the Roman church do but hinder me in this way, or any way endanger it, I am, in charity to myself, bound to forsake them, though they be not destructive of it. 4. Whereas you conclude—that if by living out of the

Roman church we put ourselves in hazard to want something necessary to salvation, we commit a grievous sin against the virtue of charity, as it respects ourselves.—This consequence may be good in those which are thus persuaded of the Roman church, and yet live out of it. But the supposition is certainly false; we may live and die out of the Roman church, without putting ourselves in any such hazard: nay, to live and die in it is as dangerous as to shoot a gulph, which, though some good ignorant souls may do and escape, yet it may well be feared, that not one in a hundred but miscarries.

7. Ad §. 3. I proceed now to the third section; and herein, first, I observe this acknowledgment of yours—That in things necessary, only because commanded, a probable ignorance of the commandment excuses the party from all fault, and doth not exclude salvation. From which doctrine it seems to me to follow, that seeing obedience to the Roman church cannot be pretended to be necessary, but only because it is commanded, therefore not only an invincible, but even a probable, ignorance of this pretended command, must excuse us from all faulty breach of it, and cannot exclude salvation. Now seeing this command is not pretended to be expressly delivered, but only to be deduced from the word of God, and that not by the most clear and evident consequences that may be; and seeing an infinity of great objections lie against it, which seem strongly to prove, that there is no such command, with what charity can you suppose, that our ignorance of this command is not at the least probable, if not, all things considered, plainly invincible? Sure I am, for my

part, that I have done my true endeavour to find it true, and am still willing to do so; but the more I seek, the farther I am from finding; and, therefore, if it be true, certainly my not finding it is very excuseable, and you have reason to be very charitable in your censures of me. 2. Whereas you say—that besides these things necessary, because commanded, there are other things which are commanded, because necessary; of which number you make a Divine infallible faith, baptism in act for children, and in desire for those who are come to the use of reason, and the sacrament of confession for those who have committed mortal sin.—In these words you seem to me to deliver a strange paradox, *viz.* that faith, and baptism, and confession, are not therefore necessary for us, because God appointed them; but are therefore appointed by God, because they were necessary for us, antecedently to his appointment; which, if it were true, I wonder what it was beside God that made them necessary, and made it necessary for God to command them! Besides, in making faith one of these necessary means, you seem to exclude infants from salvation; for "faith comes by hearing," and they have not heard. In requiring that this faith should be Divine and infallible, you cast your credence into infinite perplexity, who cannot possibly, by any sure mark, discern whether their faith be Divine or human; or if you have any certain sign, whereby they may discern whereby they believe your church's infallibility with Divine, or only with human faith, I pray produce it; for perhaps it may serve us to shew, that our faith is Divine as well as yours. Moreover, in affirm-

ing, that baptism in act is necessary for infants, and for men only in desire, you seem to me in the latter to destroy the foundation of the former. For if a desire of baptism will serve men instead of baptism, then those words of our Saviour, "Unless a man be born again of water," &c. are not to be understood literally and rigidly of external baptism; for a desire of baptism is not baptism, and so your foundation of the absolute necessity of baptism is destroyed. And if you may gloss the text so far, as that men may be saved by the desire, without baptism itself, because they cannot have it, why should you not gloss it a little farther, that there may be some hope of the salvation of unbaptized infants; to whom it was more impossible to have a desire of baptism, than for the former to have the thing itself. Lastly, for your sacrament of confession, we know none such, nor any such absolute necessity of it. They that confess their sins, and forsake them, shall find mercy, though they confess them to God only, and not to men. They that confess them both to God and men, if they do not effectually, and in time forsake them, shall not find mercy. 3. Whereas you say—that supposing these means once appointed as absolutely necessary to salvation, there cannot but arise an obligation of procuring to have them.—You must suppose, I hope, that we know them to be so appointed, and that it is in our power to procure them; otherwise, though it may be our ill fortune to fail of the end for want of the means, certainly we cannot be obliged to procure them. For the rule of the law is also the dictate of common reason and equity, that no man can be obliged to

what is impossible. We can be obliged to nothing but by virtue of some command: now it is impossible, that God should command in earnest any thing which he knows to be impossible. For to command in earnest, is to command with an intent to be obeyed, which it is not possible he should do, when he knows the thing commanded to be impossible. Lastly, Whosoever is obliged to do any thing, and does it not, commits a fault; but infants commit no fault in not procuring to have baptism; therefore no obligation lies upon them to procure it. 4. Whereas you say, that—if protestants dissent from you in the point of the necessity of baptism for infants, it cannot be denied but that our disagreement is in a point fundamental.—If you mean a point esteemed so by you, this indeed cannot be denied: but if you mean, a point that indeed is fundamental, this may certainly be denied; for I deny it, and say, that it doth not appear to me any way necessary to salvation to hold the truth, or not to hold an error, touching the condition of these infants. This is certain, and we must believe, that God will not deal unjustly with them; but how in particular he will deal with them, concerns not us, and therefore we need not much regard it. 5. Whereas you say the like of your sacrament of penance, you only say so, but your proofs are wanting. Lastly, Whereas you say—This rigour ought not to seem strange or unjust in God, but that we are rather to bless him for ordaining us to salvation by any means.—I answer, that it is true we are not to question the known will of God of injustice; yet whether that which you pretend to be God's will be so indeed, or only your presump-

tion, this I hope may be questioned lawfully and without presumption; and if we have occasion, we may safely put you in mind of Ezekiel's commination against all those who say, Thus saith the Lord, when they have no certain warrant or authority from him to do so.

8. Ad §. 4. In the fourth paragraph, you deliver this false and wicked doctrine—That for the procuring our own salvation, we are always bound, under pain of mortal sin, to take the safest way; but for avoiding sin we are not bound to do so, but may follow the opinion of any probable doctors, though the contrary way be certainly free from sin, and theirs be doubtful.—Which doctrine, in the former part of it, is apparently false: for, though wisdom and charity to ourselves would persuade us always to do so, yet many times, that way, which to ourselves and our salvation is more full of hazard, is notwithstanding not only lawful, but more charitable, and more noble. For example, to fly from a persecution, and so to avoid the temptation of it, may be a safer way for a man's own salvation; yet, I presume no man ought to condemn him of impiety, who should resolve not to use his liberty in this matter, but for God's greater glory, the greater honour of truth, and the greater confirmation of his brethren in the faith, choose to stand out the storm, and endure the fiery trial, rather than to avoid it; rather to put his own soul to the hazard of a temptation, in hope of God's assistance to go through with it, than to balk the opportunity of doing God and his brethren so great a service. This part, therefore, of this doctrine is manifestly untrue: the other, not only false, but impious; for therein you plainly

give us to understand, that in your judgment, a resolution to avoid sin, to the uttermost of our power, is no necessary means of salvation; nay, that a man may resolve not to do so, without any danger of damnation. Therein you teach us, that we are to do more for the love of ourselves, and our own happiness, than for the love of God; and in so doing contradict our Saviour, who expressly commands us, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength; and hath taught us, that the love of God consists in avoiding sin, and keeping his commandments. Therein you directly cross St. Paul's doctrine, who, though he were a very probable doctor, and had delivered his judgment for the lawfulness of eating meats offered to idols; yet he assures us, that he which should make scruple of doing so, and forbear upon his scruple, should not sin, but only be a weaker brother; whereas he, who should do it with a doubtful conscience, (though the action were by St. Paul warranted lawful yet) should sin, and be condemned for so doing. You pretend indeed to be rigid defenders, and stout champions, for the necessity of good works; but the truth is, you speak lies in hypocrisy; and, when the matter is well examined, will appear to make yourselves and your own functions necessary, but obedience to God unnecessary: which will appear to any man, who considers what strict necessity the Scripture imposes upon all men, of effectual mortification of the habits of all vices, and effectual conversion to newness of life, and universal obedience; and withal remembers, that an act of attrition, which, you say, with priestly absolution, is sufficient to

salvation, is not mortification, which, being a work of difficulty and time, cannot be performed in an instant. But, for the present, it appears sufficiently out of this impious assertion, which makes it absolutely necessary for men, either in act, if it be possible, or if not, in desire, to be baptized and absolved by you, and that with intention; and, in the mean time, warrants them, that for avoiding of sin, they may safely follow the uncertain guidance of vain man, who you cannot deny may either be deceived himself, or out of malice deceive them, and neglect the certain direction of God himself, and their own consciences. What wicked use is made of this doctrine, your own long experience can better inform you, than it is possible for me to do; yet my own little conversation with you affords one memorable example to this purpose. For upon this ground I knew a young scholar in Doway, licensed by a great casuist to swear a thing as upon his certain knowledge, whereof he had yet no knowledge, but only a great presumption, because (forsooth) it was the opinion of one doctor that he might do so. And, upon the same ground, whensoever you shall come to have a prevailing party in this kingdom, and power sufficient to restore your religion, you may do it by deposing or killing the king, by blowing up of parliaments, and by rooting out all others of a different faith from you. Nay, this you may do, though in your own opinion it be unlawful, because * Bellarmine, a man with

* Bellar. contr. Barcl. c. vii. in 7. c. Refutare conatur Barcl. verba illa Romuli: Veteres illos imperatores, Constantium, Valentem, et cæteros, non ideo toleravit ecclesia, quod legitime successissent, sed quod illos sine populi detrimento coercere non

you of approved virtue, learning, and judgment, had declared his opinion for the lawfulness of it in saying—that want of power to maintain a rebellion, was the only reason, that the primitive Christians did not rebel against the persecuting emperors. By the same rule, seeing the priests, and scribes, and pharisees, men of greatest repute among the Jews for virtue, learning, and wisdom, held it a lawful and a pious work to persecute Christ and his apostles, it was lawful for the people to follow their leaders; for herein, according to your doctrine, they proceeded prudently, and, according to the conduct of opinion, maturely weighed and approved by men (as it seemed to them) of virtue, learning, and wisdom; nay, by such as sat in Moses' chair, and of whom it was said, "Whatsoever they bid you observe that observe and do;" which universal you pretend is to be understood universally, and without any restriction or limitation. And as lawful was it for the pagans to persecute the primitive Christians, because Trajan and Pliny, men of great virtue and wisdom, were of this opinion. Lastly, That most impious and detestable doctrine (which by a foul calumny you impute to me, who abhor and detest it), that men may be saved in any religion, follows from this ground unavoidably. For certainly, religion is

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poterat. Et miratur hoc idem scripsisse Bellar. l. v. de Pontif. c. vii. Sed ut magis miretur, sciat hoc idem sensisse St. Thom. 2. 2. q. 2. art. 2. adi. 1. Ubi dicit ecclesiam tolerasse, ut fideles obedirent Juliano Apostatæ, quia in sui novitate nondum habebant vires compescendi principes terrenos. Et postea: Sanctus Gregorius dicit, Nullum adversus Juliani persecutionem fuisse remedium præter lacrymas, quoniam non habebat ecclesia vires, quibus illius tyrannidi resistere posset.

one of those things which is necessary, only because it is commanded; for if none were commanded, under pain of damnation, how could it be damnable to be of any, or to be of none? Neither can it be damnable to be of a false religion, unless it be a sin to be so. For neither are men saved by good luck, but only by obedience; neither are they damned for their ill fortune, but for sin and disobedience. Death is the wages of nothing but sin; and St. James sure intended to deliver the adequate cause of sin and death in these words; "Lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Seeing, therefore, in such things, according to your doctrine, it is sufficient for avoiding of sin, that we proceed prudently, and by the conduct of some probable opinion, maturely weighed and approved by men of learning, virtue, and wisdom: and, seeing neither Jews want their Gamaliels, nor pagans their Antoninus's, nor any sect of Christians such professors and maintainers of their several sects, as are esteemed by the people which know no better (and that very reasonably), men of virtue, learning, and wisdom; it follows evidently, that the embracing their religion proceeds upon such reason as may warrant their action to be prudent; and, this (you say) is sufficient for the avoiding of sin, and therefore, certainly for avoiding damnation; for that in human affairs and discourse evidence and certainty cannot be always expected. I have stood the longer upon the refutation of this doctrine, not only because it is impious, and because bad use is made of it, and worse may be, but also, because the contrary position—That men are bound for avoid-

ing sin always to take the safest way, is a fair and sure foundation for a clear confutation of the main conclusion, which in this chapter you labour in vain to prove; and a certain proof, that in regard of the precept of charity towards one's self and of obedience to God, papists (unless ignorance excuse them) are in a state of sin as long as they remain in subjection to the Roman church.

9. For if the safer way for avoiding sin be also the safer way for avoiding damnation, then certainly it will not be hard to determine, that the way of protestants must be more secure, and the Roman way more dangerous. Take but into your consideration these ensuing controversies; whether it be lawful to worship pictures? To picture the Trinity? To invocate saints and angels? To deny laymen the cup in the sacrament? To adore the sacrament? To prohibit certain orders of men and women to marry? To celebrate the public service of God in a language which the assistants generally understand not? And you will not choose but confess, that in all these you are on the more dangerous side for the committing of sin, and we on that which is more secure. For in all these things, if we say true, you do that which is impious. On the other side, if you were in the right, yet we might be secure enough; for we should only not do something which you confess not necessary to be done. We pretend, and are ready to justify out of principles agreed upon between us, that in all these things you violate the manifest commandments of God; and allege such texts of Scripture against you, as, if you would weigh them with any indifference, would put the matter out of question; but certainly you cannot

with any modesty deny, but that at least they make it questionable. On the other side, you cannot with any face pretend, and if you should, know not how to go about to prove, that there is any necessity of doing any of these things; that it is unlawful not to worship pictures, not to picture the Trinity, not to invocate saints and angels, to give all men the entire sacrament, not to adore the eucharist, not to prohibit marriage, not to celebrate Divine service in an unknown tongue; I say, you neither do nor can pretend, that there is any law of God which enjoins us, no nor so much as an evangelical council that advises us, to do any of these things. Now "where no law is, there can be no sin; for sin is the transgression of the law." It remains, therefore, that if your church should forbear to do these things, she must undoubtedly herein be free from all danger and suspicion of sin; whereas your acting of them must be, if not certainly impious, without all contradiction questionable and dangerous. I conclude, therefore, that which was to be concluded, that if the safer way for avoiding sin be also (as most certainly it is) the safer way for avoiding damnation, then certainly the way of protestants must be more safe, and the Roman way more dangerous. You will say, I know, that these things being by your church concluded lawful, we are obliged by God, though not to do, yet to approve, them: at least in your judgment we are so, and therefore our condition is as questionable as yours. I answer, the authority of your church is no common principle agreed upon between us, and therefore from that you are not to dispute against us. We might press you with our judgment as well and as

justly as you do us with yours. Besides, this very thing, that your church hath determined these things lawful, and commanded the approbation of them, is that whereof she is accused by us, and we maintain you have done wickedly, or at least very dangerously, in so determining; because in these very determinations, you have forsaken that way which was secure from sin, and chosen that which you cannot but know to be very questionable and doubtful; and, consequently, have forsaken the safe way to heaven, and taken a way which is full of danger. And, therefore, although, if your obedience to your church were questioned, you might fly for shelter to your church's determinations, yet when these determinations are accused, methinks they should not be alleged in defence of themselves. But you will say, your church is infallible, and therefore her determinations are not unlawful.—*Ans.* They that accuse your church of error, you may be sure do question her infallibility: shew therefore where it is written, that your church is infallible, and the dispute will be ended. But, till you do so, give me leave rather to conclude thus: Your church, in many of her determinations, chooses not that way which is most secure from sin, and therefore not the safest way to salvation; than vainly to imagine her infallible, and thereupon to believe, though she teach not the surest way to avoid sin, yet she teaches the certainest way to obtain salvation.

10. In the close of this number, you say as follows:—If it may appear, though not certain, yet at least probable, that protestancy unrepented destroys salvation, and withal, that there is a safer way, it will follow, that they are obliged by the

law of charity to embrace that safe way.—*Ans.* Make this appear, and I will never persuade any man to continue a protestant; for, if I should, I should persuade him to continue a fool. But, after all these prolix discourses, still we see you are at—If it may appear: from whence, without all *ifs* and *ands*, that appears sufficiently which I said in the beginning of the chapter, that the four first paragraphs of this chapter are wholly spent in an unnecessary introduction unto that which never by any man in his right wits was denied, that men, in wisdom and charity to themselves, are to take the safest way to eternal salvation.

11. Ad § 5. In the fifth you begin to make some shew of arguing, and tell us, that protestants have reason to doubt in what case they stand, from what you have said about the church's universal infallibility, and of her being judge of controversies, &c.—*Ans.* From all that which you have said, they have reason only to conclude, that you have nothing to say. They have as much reason to doubt, whether there can be any motion, from what Zeno says in Aristotle's physics, as to doubt from what you have said, whether the Roman church may possibly err. For this, I dare say, that not the weakest of Zeno's arguments, but is stronger than the strongest of your's, and that you would be more perplexed in answering any of them, than I have been in answering all yours. You are pleased to repeat two or three of them in this section, and in all probability so wise a man as you are, if he would repeat any, would repeat the best; and, therefore, if I desire the reader by these to judge of the rest, I shall desire but ordinary justice.

12. The first of them being put into form, stands thus—Every least error of faith destroys the nature of faith: It is certain, that some protestants do err; and therefore they want the substance of faith. The major of which syllogism I have formerly confuted by unanswerable arguments out of one of your own best authors, who shews plainly that he hath amongst you, as strange as you make it, many other abettors. Besides, if it were true, it would conclude, that either you, or the Dominicans have no faith, inasmuch as you oppose one another as much as Arminians and Calvinists.

13. The second argument stands thus:—Since all protestants pretend the like certainty, it is clear, that none of them have any certainty at all. Which argument, if it were good, then what can hinder but this must also be so; since protestants and papists pretend the like certainty, it is clear, that none of them have any certainty at all! And this too: Since all Christians pretend the like certainty it is clear that none of them have any certainty at all! And, thirdly, this: Since men of all religions pretend a like certainty, it is clear, that none of them have any at all! And, lastly, this: Since ofttimes they, which are abused with a specious paralogism, pretend the like certainty with them which demonstrate, it is clear, that none of them have any certainty at all! Certainly, Sir, zeal and the devil did strangely blind you, if you did not see, that these horrid impieties were the immediate consequences of your positions; if you did see it, and yet would set them down, you deserve a worse censure. Yet such as these are all the arguments wherewith you conceive yourself to have proved.

undoubtedly, that protestants have reason at least to doubt in what case they stand. Neither am I afraid to venture my life upon it, that yourself shall not choose so much as one out of all the pack, which I will not shew before indifferent judges, either to be impertinent to the question, inconsequent in the deduction, or grounded upon some false, or at least uncertain, foundation.

14. Your third and fourth argument may be thus put into one:—Protestants cannot tell what points in particular be fundamental; therefore they cannot tell whether they or their brethren do not err fundamentally, and whether their difference be not fundamental.—Both which deductions I have formerly shewed to be most inconsequent; for knowing the Scripture to contain all fundamentals, (though many more points besides, which makes it difficult to say precisely what is fundamental, and what not; knowing this, I say, and believing it) what can hinder but that I may be well assured that I believe all fundamentals, and that all who believe the Scripture sincerely, as well as I, do not differ from me in any thing fundamental?

15. In the close of this section, you say that you omit to add that we want the sacrament of repentance, instituted for the remission of sins; or at least we must confess that we hold it not necessary: and yet our own brethren the century writers acknowledge, that in the time of Cyprian and Tertullian, private confession even of thoughts was used, and that it was then commanded and thought necessary; and then our ordination (you say), is very doubtful, and all that depends upon it.—*Ans.* I also omit to answer, 1. That your

brother Rhenanus acknowledges the contrary, and assures us, that the confession then required, and in use, was public, and before the church, and that your auricular confession was not then in the world; for which his mouth is stopped by your Index Expurgatorius. 2. That your brother Arcadius acknowledges, that the eucharist was in Cyprian's time given to infants, and esteemed necessary, or at least profitable for them; and the giving it shews no less: and now I would know, whether you will acknowledge your church bound to give it, and to esteem so of it. 3. That it might be then commanded, and being commanded, be thought necessary, and yet be but a church constitution. Neither will I deny, if the present church could, and would, so order it, that the abuses of it might be prevented, and conceiving it profitable, should enjoin the use of it; but that, being commanded, it would be necessary. 4. Concerning our ordinations, besides that I have proved it impossible, that they should be so doubtful as yours, according to your own principles; I answer, that experience shews them certainly sufficient to bring men to faith and repentance, and consequently to salvation; and that if there were any secret defect of any thing necessary, which we cannot help, God will certainly supply it.

16. Ad § 6. In the sixth you say—You will not repeat, but only put us again in mind, that unless the Roman church were the true church, there was no visible church upon earth; a thing so manifest, that protestants themselves confess, &c.—*Ans.* Neither will I repeat, but only put you in mind, that you have not proved that there is

any necessity that there should be any true church in your sense visible; nor, if there were, that there was no other besides the Roman. For as for the confession of protestants, which here you insist upon, it is evident out of their own words cited by yourself, that by the whole world, they meant only the greatest part of it, which is an usual figure of speech, and never intended to deny, that besides the church then reigning and triumphing in this world, there was another militant church, other Christians visible enough, though persecuted and oppressed. Nor, thirdly, do you here make good so much as with one fallacy, that if the Roman church were then the visible church, it must needs be now the only or the safer way to heaven; and yet the connexion of this consequence was very necessary to be shewn. For, for aught I know, it was not impossible that it might then be the only visible church, and yet now a very dangerous way to heaven, or perhaps none at all.

17. Afterwards you vainly pretend, that all Roman catholics, not one excepted, profess, that protestancy unrepented destroys salvation. From which generality we may except two at least to my knowledge; and those are, yourself and Franciscus de Sancta Clara, who assures * us, that ignorance and repentance may excuse a protestant from damnation, though dying in his error. And this is all the charity, which by your own confession also, the most favourable protestants allow to papists; and, therefore, with strange repugnance to yourself, you subjoin, that these are the men

* In problem 15 and 16.

whom we must hold not to err damnably, unless we will destroy our own church and salvation. Whereas, as I have said before, though you were Turks and pagans, we might be good Christians. Neither is it necessary for pepetuating of a church before Luther, that your errors even then should not be damnable, but only not actually damning, to some ignorant souls among you. In vain therefore do you make such tragedies as here you do! In vain you conjure us with fear and trembling, to consider these things! We have considered them again and again, and looked upon them on both sides, and find neither terror nor truth in them. Let children and fools be terrified with bugbears: men of understanding will not regard them.

18. Ad §. 7—11. Your whole discourse in your five next paragraphs I have in the beginning of this chapter fully confuted, by saying, that it stands altogether upon the false foundation of this affected mistake, that we do and must confess the Roman church free from damnable error; which will presently be apparent to any one who considers, that the seventh and tenth are nothing but Dr. Potter's words, and that in the other three you obtrude upon us this crambe no fewer than seven times. May you be pleased to look back to your own book, and you shall find it so as I have said; and that at least in a hundred other places, you make your advantage of this false imputation: which, when you have observed, and withal considered, that yourself plainly intimate, that Dr. Potter's discourses, which here you censure, would be good and concluding, if we did not (as we do not) free you from damnable error; I hope you will acknowledge, that my vouchsafing

these sections the honour of any farther answer, is a great supérerogation in point of civility. Nevertheless, partly that I may the more ingratiate myself with you, but especially that I may stop their mouths, who will be apt to say, that every word of yours, which I should omit to speak to, is an unanswerable argument, I will hold my purpose of answering them more punctually and particularly.

19. First, then, to your little parenthesis, which you interline among Dr. Potter's words, § 7. That any small error in faith destroys all faith (to omit what hath been said before), I answer here, what is proper for this place, that St. Augustine, whose authority is here stood upon, thought otherwise: he conceived the Donatists to hold some error in faith, and yet not to have no faith. His words of them to this purpose are most pregnant and evident: "You are with us (saith he to the Donatists, Ep. 48.) in baptism, in the Creed, and the other sacraments:" and, again, *Super gestis cum emerit.* "Thou hast proved to me, that thou hast faith; prove to me, likewise, that thou hast charity." Parallel to which words are these of Optatus:* "Amongst us and you is one ecclesiastical conversation, common lessons, the same faith, the same sacraments." Where, by the way, we may observe, that in the judgment of these fathers, even Donatists, though heretics and schismatics, gave true ordination, the true sacrament of matrimony, true sacramental absolution, confirmation, the true sacrament of the eucharist, true extreme unction; or else (choose you whether) some of these were not then esteemed sa-

* Lib. v. prope initium.

craments. But for ordination, whether he held it a sacrament or no, certainly he held, that it remained with them entire; for so he says in express terms, in his book against * Parmenianus's Epistle. Which doctrine, if you can reconcile with the present doctrine of the Roman church, *Eris mihi magnus Apollo.*

20. Whereas, in the beginning of the eighth section—you deny, that your argument drawn from our confessing the possibility of your salvation is for simple people alone, but for all men.—I answer, certainly whosoever is moved with it, must be so simple as to think this a good and a concluding reason: some ignorant men in the Roman church may be saved, by the confession of protestants (which is indeed all that they confess); therefore, it is safe for me to be of the Roman church: and he that does think so, what reason is there why he should not think this as good? Ignorant protestants may be saved, by the confession of papists (by name Mr. K.); therefore, it is safe for me to be of the protestant church. Whereas you say—that this your argument is grounded upon an inevitable necessity for us, either to grant salvation to your church, or to entail certain damnation upon our own, because ours can have no being till Luther, unless yours be supposed to have been the true church—I answer, This cause is no cause; for, first, as Luther had no being before Luther, and yet he was when he was, though he was not before; so there is no repugnance in the terms, but that there might be a true church after Luther, though there were

* Lib ii. c. iii.

none for some ages before; as, since Columbus's time there have been Christians in America, though before there were none for many ages. For neither do you shew, neither does it appear, that the generation of churches is univocal, that nothing but a church can possibly beget a church; nor that the present being of a true church depends necessarily upon the perpetuity of a church in all ages, any more than the present being of peripatetics or stoics depends upon a perpetual pedigree of them. For though I at no hand deny the church's perpetuity, yet I see nothing in your book to make me understand, that the truth of the present depends upon it, nor any thing that can hinder, but that a false church (God's providence over-watching and over-ruling) may preserve the means of confuting their own heresies, and reducing men to truth, and so raising a true church; I mean the integrity and the authority of the word of God with men. Thus the Jews preserve means to make men Christians, and papists preserve means to make men protestants, and protestants (which you say are a false church) do, as you pretend, preserve means to make men papists; that is, their own Bibles, out of which you pretend to be able to prove, that they are to be papists. Secondly, You shew not, nor does it appear, that the perpetuity of the church depends on the truth of yours. For though you talk vainly, as if you were the only men in the world before Luther, yet the world knows, that this is but talk; and that there were other Christians besides you, which might have perpetuated the church, though you had not been. Lastly, You shew not, neither doth it appear, that your being acknow-

ledged in some sense a true church, doth necessarily import, that we must grant salvation to it, unless by it you understand the ignorant members of it, which is a very unusual synecdoche.

21. Whereas you say—That the catholics never granted, that the Donatists had a true church, or might be saved:—I answer, St. Augustine himself granted, that those among them who sought the truth, being "ready, when they found it, to correct their error, were not heretics; and, therefore, notwithstanding their error, might be saved." And this is all the charity that protestants allow to papists.

22. Whereas you say, that Dr. Potter, having cited out of St. Augustine the words of the catholics, that the Donatists had true baptism, when he comes to the contrary words of the Donatists, adds, "No church, no salvation:"—*Ans.* You wrong Dr. Potter, who pretends not to cite St. Augustine's formal words, but only his sense, which in him is complete and full for that purpose whereto it is alleged by Dr. Potter. His words* are, *Petilianus dixit, Venite ad ecclesiam, populi, et aufugite traditores, si perire non vultis:* "Petilian saith, Come to the church, ye people, and fly from the traditores, if ye will not be damned; for that ye may know, that they, being guilty, esteem very well of our faith, behold, I baptize these whom they have infected, but they receive those whom we have baptized." Where, it is plain, that Petilian by his words makes the Donatists the church, and excludes the catholics from salvation absolutely. And, therefore, "No church, no sal-

* Cont. lit. Petil. l. ii. c. cviii.

vation," was not Dr. Potter's addition. And, whereas you say—the catholics never yielded, that among the Donatists there was a true church, and hope of salvation;—I say, it appears by what I have alleged out of St. Augustine, that they yielded both these were among the Donatists, as much as we yield them to be among the papists. As for Dr. Potter's acknowledgment, that they maintained an error in the matter and nature of it heretical: this proves them but material heretics, whom you do not exclude from possibility of salvation. So that, all things considered, this argument must be much more forcible from the Donatists against catholics, than from papists against protestants, in regard protestants grant papists no more hope of salvation than papists grant protestants: whereas the Donatists excluded absolutely all but their own party from hope of salvation, so far as to account them no Christians that were not of it; the catholics meanwhile accounting them brethren, and freeing those among them from the imputation of heresy, who, being in error, *quærebant cauta solicitudine veritatem, corrigi parati, cum invenerint.*

23. Whereas you say—That the argument for the certainty of their baptism (because it was confessed good by catholics, whereas the baptism of catholics was not confessed by them to be good) is not so good as yours, touching the certainty of your salvation grounded on the confession of protestants, because we confess there is no damnable error in the doctrine or practice of the Roman church:—I answer, No; we confess no such matter, and though you say so a hundred times, no repetition will make it true. We profess, plainly, that many damnable errors, plainly repugnant to

the precepts of Christ, both ceremonial and moral, more plainly than this of rebaptization, and therefore more damnable, are believed and professed by you. And, therefore, seeing this is the only disparity you can devise, and this is vanished, it remains, that as good an answer as the catholics made touching the certainty of their baptism, as good may we make, and with much more evidence of reason, touching the security and certainty of our salvation.

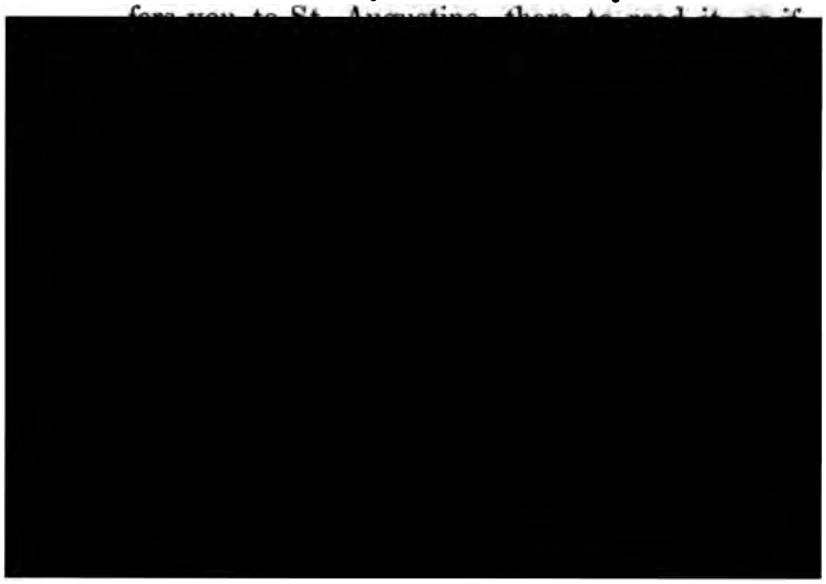
24. By the way I desire to be informed, seeing you affirm—That rebaptizing those whom heretics had baptized was a sacrilege, and a profession of a damnable heresy, when it began to be so? If from the beginning it was so, then was Cyprian a sacrilegious professor of a damnable heresy, and yet a saint and a martyr. If it were not so, then did your church excommunicate Firmilian and others, and separate from them without sufficient ground of excommunication or separation, which is schismatical. You see what difficulties you run into, on both sides; choose whether you will, but certainly both can hardly be avoided.

25. Whereas again, in this section, you obtrude upon us—That we cannot but confess, that your doctrine contains no damnable error, and that yours is so certainly a true church, that, unless your be true, we cannot pretend any:—I answer, There is in this neither truth nor modesty to outface us, that we cannot but confess what indeed we cannot but deny. For my part, if I were upon the rack, I persuade myself I should not confess the one nor the other.

26. Whereas again presently you add—That Dr. Potter grants we should be guilty of schism, if we

did cut off your church from the body of Christ, and the hope of salvation:—I have shewed above, that he grants no such mattter. He says, indeed, that our not doing so frees us from the imputation of schism; and from hence you sophistically infer, that he must grant, if we did so, we were schismatics; and then make your reader believe, that this is Dr. Potter's confession, it being indeed your own false collection. For as every one, that is not a papist, is not a Jesuit; and yet not every one, that is a papist, is a Jesuit: as whosoever comes not into England, comes not to London; and yet many may come into England, and not come to London: as whosoever is not a man, is not a king; and yet many are men, that are not kings: so likewise it may be certain, that whosoever does not so, is free from schism; and yet they that do so, (if there be sufficient cause) may not be guilty of it.

27. Whereas you pretend to wonder, that the Doctor did not answer the argument of the Donatists, which he says is all one with yours, but refers you to St. Augustine, there to read it, as if



Augustine for an answer to it. Whereas you say, he had reason to conceal it, because it makes directly against himself; I say, it is so far from doing so, that it will serve in proportion to the argument, as fitly as if it had been made for it: for as St. Augustine says, that catholics approve the doctrine of Donatists, but abhor their heresy of rebaptization; so we say, that we approve those fundamental and simple necessary truths which you retain, by which some good souls among you may be saved, but abhor your many superstitions and heresies. And, as he says that gold is good, yet ought not to be sought for among a company of thieves; and baptism good, but not to be sought for in the conventicles of Donatists; so say we, that the truths you retain are good, and, as we hope, sufficient to bring good ignorant souls among you to salvation; yet are they not to be sought for in the conventicles of papists, who hold with them a mixture of many vanities, and many impieties. For, as for our freeing you from damnable heresy, and yielding you salvation, (which stone here again you stumble at) neither he nor any other protestant is guilty of it; and, therefore, you must confess, that this very answer will serve protestants against this charm of papists, as well as St. Augustine against the Donatists, and that indeed it was not Dr. Potter, but you, that without a sarcasm had reason to conceal it.

28. The last piece of Dr. Potter's book, which you are pleased to take notice of in this first part of yours, is an argument he makes in your behalf, p. 79. of his book, where he makes you speak thus: if protestants believe the religion of papists to be a safe way to heaven, why do they not follow it?

This argument you like not, because many things may be good, and yet not necessary to be embraced by every body; and, therefore, scoff at it, and call it an argument of his own, a wise argument, a wise demand; and then ask of him, what he thinks of it being framed thus: Our religion is safe, even by your confession; and therefore, you ought to grant that all may embrace it.—And yet farther thus: Among different religions one only can be safe. But yours, by our own confession, is safe; whereas you hold, that in ours there is no hope of salvation; therefore we ought to embrace yours. *Ans.* I have advised with him, and am to tell you from him, that he thinks reasonably well of the arguments, but very ill of him that makes them, as affirming so often without shame and conscience, what he cannot but know to be plainly false; and his reason is, because he is so far from confessing, or giving you any ground to pretend he does confess, that your religion is safe, for all that are of it, from whence only it will follow, that all may safely embrace it; that in this very place, from which you take these words, he professeth plainly—that it is extremely dangerous, if not certainly damnable, to all such as profess it, when either they do, or, if their hearts were upright, and not perversely obstinate, might believe the contrary; and that, for us, who are convinced in conscience, that she (the Roman church) errs in many things, it lies upon us, even under pain of damnation, to forsake her in those errors: and though here you take upon you a shew of great rigour, and will seem to hold that in our way there is no hope of salvation; yet formerly you have been more liberal of your charity towards us, and will needs vie and contend with Dr.

Potter, which of the two shall be more charitable, assuring us—that you allow protestants as much charity as * Dr. Potter spares you, for whom he makes ignorance the best hope of salvation.—And now I appeal to any indifferent reader, whether our disavowing to confess you free from damnable error, were not (as I pretend) a full confutation of all that you say in these five foregoing paragraphs: and, as for you, I wonder what answer, what evasion, what shift you can devise to clear yourself from dishonesty, for imputing to him, almost a hundred times, this acknowledgment, which he never makes, but very often, and that so plainly, that you take notice of it, professeth the contrary.

29. The best defence that possibly can be made for you, I conceive, is this; that you were led into this error, by mistaking a supposition of a confession for a confession, a rhetorical concession of the Doctor's for a positive assertion. He says indeed of your errors—Though in the issue they be not damnable to them which believe as they profess; yet for us to profess what we believe not, were without question damnable.—But to say, though your errors be not damnable, we may not profess them, is not to say your errors are not damnable, but only though they be not. As if you should say, Though the church err in points not fundamental, yet you may not separate from it; or, though we do err in believing Christ really present, yet our error frees us from idolatry; or, as if a protestant should say, Though you do not commit idolatry in adoring

* Chap. i. § 4.

the host, yet being uncertain of the priest's intention to consecrate, at least you expose yourself to the danger of it; I presume you would not think it fairly done, if any man should interpret either this last speech as an acknowledgment, that you do not commit idolatry; or the former as confessions, that you do err in points not fundamental, that you do err in believing the real presence. And, therefore, you ought not so to have mistaken Dr. Potter's words, as if he had confessed the errors of your church not damnable, when he says no more but this—Though they be so—or, suppose, or put the case they be so, yet being errors, we that know them, may not profess them to be Divine truths. Yet this mistake might have been pardonable, had not Dr. Potter in many places of his book, by declaring his judgment touching the quality and malignity of your errors, taken away from you all occasion of error. But now that he says plainly—That your church hath many ways played the harlot, and in that regard deserved a bill of divorce from Christ, and the detestation of Christians, p. 11. That for that mass of errors and abuses in judgment and practice, which is proper to her, and wherein she differs from us, we judge a reconciliation impossible, and to us (who are convicted in conscience of her corruptions) damnable, p. 20. That popery is the contagion or plague of the church, p. 60. That we cannot, we dare not, communicate with her in her public liturgy, which is manifestly polluted with gross superstition, p. 68. That they who in former ages died in the church of Rome, died in many sinful errors, p. 78. That they that have understanding and means to dis-

cover their errors, and neglect to use them, he dares not to flatter them with so easy a censure, as to give them hope of salvation, p. 79. That the way of the Roman religion is not safe, but very dangerous, if not certainly damnable, to such as profess it, when they believe (or, if their hearts were upright, and not perversely obstinate, might believe) the contrary, p. 79. That your church is but, in some sense, a true church; and your errors only to some men not damnable; and that we, who are convinced in conscience, that she errs in many things, are, under pain of damnation, to forsake her in those errors:—Seeing, I say, he says all this so plainly, and so frequently, certainly your charging him falsely with this acknowledgement, and building a great part not only of your discourse in this chapter, but of your whole book upon it, possibly it may be palliated with some excuse, but it can no way be defended with any just apology: especially seeing you yourself, more than once or twice, take notice of these his severer censures of your church, and the errors of it, and make your advantage of them. In the first number of your first chapter, you set down three of the former places; and from thence infer, that as you affirm protestancy unrepented destroys salvation, so Dr. Potter pronounces the like heavy doom against Roman catholics: and again, §. 4. of the same chapter—We allow protestants as much charity as Dr. Potter spares us, for whom he makes ignorance the best hope of salvation.—And Chap. V. §. 41. you have these words: "It is very strange, that you judge us extremely uncharitable in saying, protestants cannot be saved, while yourself avouch the same of all learned ca-

tholics, whom ignorance cannot excuse!" Thus out of the same mouth you blow hot and cold; and, one while, when it is for your purpose, you profess Dr. Potter censures your errors as heavily as you do ours; which is very true, for he gives hope of salvation to none among you, but to those whose ignorance was the cause of their error, and sin no cause of their ignorance; and, presently after, when another project comes in your head, you make his words softer than oil towards you: you pretend he does and must confess, that your doctrine contains no damnable error, that your church is certainly a true church, that your way to heaven is a safe way; and all these acknowledgments you set down simple and absolute, without any restriction or limitation: whereas in the Doctor they are all so qualified, that no knowing papist can promise himself any security or comfort from them. "We confess (saith he) the church of Rome to be, in some sense, a true church, and her errors to some men not damnable; we believe her religion safe, that is, by God's great mercy, not damnable, to some such as believe what they profess; but we believe it not safe, but very dangerous, if not certainly damnable, to such as profess it, when they believe (or, if their hearts were upright, and not perversely obstinate, might believe) the contrary." Observe, I pray you, these restraining terms which formerly you have dissembled:—A true church, in some sense, not damnable to some men, a safe way, that is, by God's great mercy, not damnable to some.—And then seeing you have pretended these confessions to be absolute, which are thus plainly limited, how can you avoid the imputation of an

egregious sophister? You quarrel with the Doctor, in the end of your preface, for using in his book such ambiguous terms as these—in some sort, in some sense, in some degree; and desire him, if he make any reply, either to forbear them, or to tell you roundly in what sort, in what sense, in what degree, he understands these and the like mincing phrases. But the truth is, he hath not left them so ambiguous and undetermined as you pretend; but told you plainly, in what sense your church may pass for a true church, viz. in regard we may hope, that she retains those truths which are simply, absolutely, and indispensably necessary to salvation, which may suffice to bring those good souls to heaven, who wanted means of discovering their errors. This is the charitable construction in which you may pass for a church; and to what men your religion may be safe, and your errors not damnable, viz. to such whom ignorance may excuse. And, therefore, he hath more cause to complain of you, for quoting his words without those qualifications, than you to find fault with him for using of them.

30. That your discourse in the 12th §. presseth you as forcibly as protestants, I have shewed above. I add here, 1. Whereas you say, that "Faith, according to your rigid Calvinists, is either so strong, that, once had, it can never be lost; or so more than weak, and so much nothing, that it can never be gotten;" that these are words without sense. Never any Calvinist affirmed that faith was so weak, and so much nothing, that it can never be gotten; but it seems you wanted matter to make up your antithesis; and, therefore, were

resolved to speak empty words, rather than lose your figure.

——————Crimina rasis
Librat in antithetis, doctas posuisse figuras
Laudatur——————

2. That there is no Calvinist that will deny the truth of this proposition, Christ died for all; nor subscribe to that sense of it, which your Dominicans put upon it; neither can you, with coherence to the received doctrine of your own society, deny that they, as well as the Calvinists, take away the distinction of sufficient and effectual grace, and indeed hold none to be sufficient, but only that which is effectual. 3. Whereas you say—They cannot make their calling certain by good works, who do certainly believe, that before any good works they are justified, and justified by faith alone, and by that faith whereby they certainly believe they are justified.—I answer, There is no protestant but believes, that faith, repentance, and universal obedience, are necessary to the obtaining of God's favour and eternal happiness. This being granted, the rest is but a speculative controversy, a question about words, which would quickly vanish, but that men affect not to understand one another. As if a company of physicians were in consultation, and should all agree, that three medicines, and no more, were necessary for the recovery of the patient's health; this were sufficient for his direction towards the recovery of his health; though, concerning the proper and specifical effects of these three medicines, there should be amongst them as many

differences as men; so likewise, being generally at accord, that these three things, faith, hope, and charity, are necessary to salvation, so that, whosoever wants any of them, cannot obtain it, and he which hath them all, cannot fail of it; is it not very evident, that they are sufficiently agreed for men's directions to eternal salvation? And, seeing charity is a full comprehension of all good works, they requiring charity as a necessary qualification in him that will be saved, what sense is there in saying—they cannot make their calling certain by good works?—They know what salvation is as well as you, and have as much reason to desire it; they believe it as heartily as you, that there is no good work but shall have its proper reward; and that there is no possibility of obtaining the eternal reward, without good works; and, why then may not this doctrine be a sufficient incitement and provocation unto good works?

31. You say—That they certainly believe that before any good works they are justified:" but this is a calumny, there is no protestant but requires to justification remission of sins, and to remission of sins they all require repentance, and repentance, I may presume, may not be denied the name of a good work; being, indeed, if it be rightly understood, and according to the sense of the word in Scripture, an effectual conversion from all sin to all holiness. But, though it be taken for mere sorrow for sins past, and a bare purpose of amendment, yet even this is a good work; and therefore protestants, requiring this to remission of sins, and remission of sins to justification, cannot with candour be pretended to believe, that they are justified before any good work.

32. You say—They believe themselves justified by faith alone, and that by that faith whereby they believe themselves justified.—Some peradventure do so, but withal they believe, that that faith which is alone, and unaccompanied with sincere and universal obedience, is to be esteemed not faith, but presumption, and is at no hand sufficient to justification; that though charity be not imputed unto justification, yet it is required as a necessary disposition in the person to be justified; and that though, in regard of the imperfection of it, no man can be justified by it, yet that, on the other side, no man can be justified without it. So that, upon the whole matter, a man may truly and safely say, that the doctrine of these protestants, taken all together, is not a doctrine of liberty, not a doctrine that turns hope into presumption and carnal security; though it may justly be feared, that many licentious persons, taking it by halves, have made this wicked use of it. For my part, I do heartily wish, that by public authority it were so ordered, that no man should ever preach or print this doctrine, that faith alone justifies, unless he joins this together with it, that universal obedience is necessary to salvation: and, besides, that those chapters of St. Paul, which entreat of justification by faith, without the works of the law, were never read in the church, but when the 13th chap. of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, concerning the absolute necessity of charity, should be, to prevent misprision, read together with them.

33. Whereas you say—That some protestants do expressly affirm the former point to be the soul of the church, &c. and that, therefore, they

must want the theological virtue of hope; and that none can have true hope, while they hope to be saved in their communion:—I answer, They have great reason to believe the doctrine of justification by faith only, a point of great weight and importance, if it be rightly understood: that is, they have reason to esteem it a principal and necessary duty of a Christian, to place his hope of justification and salvation, not in the perfection of his own righteousness (which, if it be imperfect will not justify), but only in the mercies of God through Christ's satisfaction; and yet, notwithstanding this, nay, the rather for this, may preserve themselves in the right temper of good Christians, which is a happy mixture, and sweet composition, of confidence and fear. If this doctrine be otherwise expounded than I have here expounded, I will not undertake the justification of it; only I will say (that which I may do truly), that I never knew any protestant such a *soli-fidian*, but that he did believe these Divine truths:—that he must make his calling certain by good works; that he must work out his salvation with fear and trembling; and that, while he does not so, he can have no well-grounded hope of salvation:—I say, I never met with any who did not believe these Divine truths, and that with a more firm, and a more unshaken assent, than he does, that himself is predestinate, and that he is justified by believing himself justified. I never met with any such, who if he saw there was a necessity to do either, would not rather forego his belief of these doctrines than the former; these which he sees disputed, and contradicted, and opposed, with a great multitude of very potent arguments, than

those, which being the express words of Scripture, whosoever should call into question, could not with any modesty pretend to the title of Christian. And, therefore, there is no reason but we may believe, that their full assurance of the former doctrine doth very well qualify their persuasion of the latter; and that the former (as also the lives of many of them do sufficiently testify) are more effectual to temper their hope, and to keep it at a stay of a filial and modest assurance of God's favour, built upon the conscience of his love and fear, than the latter can be to swell and puff them up into vain confidence, and ungrounded presumption. This reason, joined with our experience of the honest and religious conversation of many men of this opinion, is a sufficient ground for charity, to hope well of their hope; and to assure ourselves, that it cannot be offensive, but rather most acceptable to God, if, notwithstanding this diversity of opinion, we embrace each other with the strict embraces of love and communion. To you and your church we leave it, to separate Christians from the church, and to proscribe them from heaven upon trivial and trifling causes. As for ourselves, we conceive a charitable judgment of our brethren and their errors, though untrue, much more pleasing to God than a true judgment, if it be uncharitable; and, therefore, shall always choose (if we do err) to err on the milder and more merciful part, and rather to retain those in our communion, which deserve to be ejected, than eject those that deserve to be retained.

34. Lastly, Whereas you say—That seeing protestants differ about the point of justification, you must needs infer, that they want unity in faith,

and consequently all faith; and then, that they cannot agree what points are fundamental:—I answer to the first of these inferences, That as well might you infer it upon Victor, bishop of Rome, and Polycrates, upon Stephen, bishop of Rome, and St. Cyprian, inasmuch as it is undeniably evident, that what one of those esteemed necessary to salvation, the other esteemed not so. But points of doctrine (as all other things) are as they are, and not as they are esteemed: neither can a necessary point be made unnecessary, by being so accounted, or an unnecessary point be made necessary, by being overvalued. But as the ancient philosophers (whose different opinions about the soul of man you may read in Aristotle de Anima, and Cicero's Tusculan Questions), notwithstanding their diverse opinions touching the nature of the soul, yet all of them had souls, and souls of the same nature: or, as those physicians, who dispute whether the brain or heart be the principal part of a man, yet all of them have brains, and have hearts, and herein agree sufficiently: so, likewise, though some protestants esteem that doctrine the soul of the church, which others do not so highly value, yet this hinders not, but that which is indeed the soul of the church, may be in both sorts of them: and though one account that a necessary truth, which others account neither necessary, nor perhaps true; yet, this notwithstanding, in those truths, which are truly and really necessary, they may all agree. For no argument can be more sophistical than this: they differ in some points, which they esteem necessary; therefore they differ in some, that in deed and in truth are so.

35. Now as concerning the other inference—that they cannot agree what points are fundamental:—I have said and proved formerly, that there is no such necessity as you imagine or pretend, that you should certainly know what is, and what is not, fundamental. They that believe all things plainly delivered in Scripture, believe all things fundamental, and are at sufficient unity in matters of faith, though they cannot precisely and exactly distinguish between what is fundamental, and what is profitable; nay, though by error they mistake some vain, or perhaps some hurtful opinions, for necessary and fundamental truths. Besides, I have shewed above, that as protestants do not agree (for you over-reach in saying they cannot), touching what points are fundamental; so neither do you agree what points are defined, and so to be accounted, and what are not; nay,* not concerning the subject in which God hath placed this pretended authority of defining, some of you settling it in the pope himself, though alone without a council; others in a council, though divided from the pope; others only in the conjunction of council and pope; others not in this neither, but in the acceptation of the present church universal. Lastly, Others not attributing it to this neither, but only to the perpetual succession of the church of all ages; of which divided company, it is very evident and undeniable, that every former may be and are obliged to hold many things defined, and therefore necessary, which the latter, according to their own grounds, have no obligation to do, nay cannot do so, upon any firm, and sure, and infallible foundation.

* C. 3. §. 54. et alibi.

THE CONCLUSION.

And thus, by God's assistance, and the advantage of a good cause, I am at length, through a passage rather tiring than difficult, arrived at the end of my undertaken voyage; and have, as I suppose, made appear, to all disinterested and unprejudicate readers, what in the beginning I undertook, that a vein of sophistry and calumny runs through this first part of your book; wherein, though I never thought of the directions you have been pleased to give me in your pamphlet, intituled, A Direction to N. N. yet, upon consideration of my answer, I find, that I have proceeded, as if I had it always before my eyes, and steered my course by it, as by a card and compass.

For, First, I have not proceeded by a mere destructive way, (as you call it) nor objected such difficulties against your religion, as upon examination tend to the overthrow of all religion; but have shewed, that the truth of Christianity is clearly independent upon the truth of popery; and that, on the other side, the arguments you urge, and the courses you take, for the maintenance of your religion, do manifestly tend (if they be closely and consequently followed) to the destruction of all religion, and lead men by the hand to atheism and impiety; whereof I have given you ocular demonstrations in divers places of my book; but especially in my Answer to your Direction to N. N.

Neither can I discover any repugnance between any one part of my Answer and any other, though I have used many more judicious and more searching eyes than mine own, to make, if it were possible, such a discovery; and therefore am in good hope, that though the music I have made be but dull and flat, and even downright plain song, even your curious and critical ears shall discover no discord in it; but, on the other side, I have charged you frequently, and very justly, with manifest contradiction and retractation of your own assertions, and not seldom of the main grounds you build upon, and the principal conclusions which you endeavour to maintain: which I conceive myself to have made apparent, even to the eye, c. ii. § 5. c. iii. § 88. c. iv. § 14. 24. c. v. § 93. c. vi. § 6, 7. 12. 17. c. vii. § 29. and in many other parts of my Answer.

And though I did never pretend to defend Dr. Potter absolutely, and in all things, but only so far as he defends truth, (neither did Dr. Potter desire me, nor any law of God or man oblige me, to defend him any farther) yet I do not find, that I have cause to differ from him in any matter of moment, particularly, not concerning the infallibility of God's church, which I grant with him to be infallible in fundamentals; because, if it should err in fundamentals, it were not the church: nor concerning the supernaturality of faith, which I know and believe as well as you, to be—the gift of God, and—that flesh and blood revealed it not unto us, but our Father, which is in heaven.—But now, if it were demanded, what defence you can make for deserting Charity Mistaken, in the main question disputed between him and Dr. Potter

—Whether protestancy, without a particular repentance and dereliction of it, destroys salvation, whereof I have convinced you? I believe your answer would be much like that which Ulysses makes in the Metamorphosis for his running away from his friend Nestor; that is, none at all.

For opposing the Articles of the church of England, the approbation, I presume, clears my book from this imputation.

And whereas you gave me a caution—That my grounds destroy not the belief of divers doctrines, which all good Christians believe, yea, and of all verities that cannot be proved by natural reason:—I profess sincerely, that I do not know, nor believe, that any ground laid by me in my whole book is any way inconsistent with any one such doctrine, or with any verity revealed in the word of God, though never so improbable or incomprehensible to natural reason; and if I thought there were, I would deal with it as those primitive converts dealt with their curious books in the Acts of the Apostles.

For the Epistle of St. James, and those other books, which were anciently controverted, and are now received by the church of England as canonical, I am so far from relying upon any principles, which must, to my apprehension, bring with them the denial of the authority of them, that I myself believe them all to be canonical.

For the overthrowing the infallibility of all Scripture, my book is so innocent of it, that the infallibility of Scripture is the chiefest of all my grounds.

And, Lastly, For arguments tending to prove an impossibility of all Divine, supernatural, infallible

faith and religion, I assure myself, that if you were ten times more a spider than you are, you could suck no such poison from them. My heart, I am sure, is innocent of any such intention, and the Searcher of all hearts knows, that I had no other end in writing this book, but to confirm, to the uttermost of my ability, the truth of the Divine and infallible religion of our dearest Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus, which I am ready to seal and confirm, not with my arguments only, but my blood.

Now these are the directions which you have been pleased to give me, whether out of a fear, that I might otherwise deviate from them, or out of a desire to make others think so; but howsoever, I have not, to my understanding, swerved from them in any thing; which puts me in good hope, that my answer to this first part of your book will give even to yourself indifferent good satisfaction.

I have also provided, though this were more than I undertook, a just and punctual examination and refutation of your second part: but, if you will give your consent, am resolved to suppress it, and that for divers sufficient and reasonable considerations.

First, Because the discussion of the controversies intreated of in the first part, if we shall think fit to proceed in it, as I for my part shall, so long as I have truth to reply, will, I conceive, be sufficient employment for us, though we cast off the burden of those many lesser disputes, which remain behind in the second. And perhaps we may do God and his church more service, by exactly discussing, and fully clearing, the truth in these

few, than by handling many after a slight and perfunctory manner.

Secondly, Because the addition of the second part, whether for your purpose or mine, is clearly unnecessary; there being no understanding man, papist, or protestant, but will confess, that (forasmuch as concerns the main question, now in agitation, about the saveableness of protestants) if the first part of your book be answered, there needs no reply to the second; as, on the other side, I shall willingly grant, if I have not answered the first, I cannot answer a great part of the second.

Thirdly, Because the addition of the second not only is unnecessary, but in effect by yourself confessed to be so. For in your preamble to your second part you tell us—that the substance of the present controversy is handled in the first; and therein also you pretend to have answered the chief grounds of Dr. Potter's book: so that in replying to your second part, I shall do little else but pursue shadows.

Fourthly, Because your second part (setting aside repetitions and references) is in a manner made up of disputes about particular matters, which you are very importunate to have forborn, as suspecting, at least pretending to suspect, that they were brought in purposely by Dr. Potter to dazzle the reader's eyes, and distract his mind, that he might not see the clearness of the reasons brought in defence of the general doctrine delivered in Charity Mistaken: all which you are likely enough, if there be occasion, to say again to me; and therefore I am resolved for once even to humour you so far as to keep my discourse with-

in those very lists and limits which yourself have prescribed, and to deal with you upon no other arguments, but only those wherein you conceive your chief advantage, and principal strength, and, as it were, your Samson's lock, to lie; wherein, if I gain the cause clearly from you, (as I verily hope, by God's help, I shall do) it cannot but redound much to the honour of the truth maintained by me, which by so weak a champion can overcome such an Achilles in error, even in his strongest holds.

For these reasons, although I have made ready an answer to your second part, and therein have made it sufficiently evident, that, for shifting evasions from Dr. Potter's arguments, for impertinent cavils, and frivolous exceptions, and injurious calumnies against him for his misalleging of authors; for proceeding upon false and ungrounded principles; for making inconsequent and sophistical deductions; and, in a word, for all the virtues of an ill answer, your second part is no way second to the first: yet, notwithstanding all this disadvantage, I am resolved, if you will give me leave, either wholly to suppress it, or at least to defer the publication of it, until I see what exceptions, upon a twelve-month's examination, (for so long I am well assured you have had it in your hands) you can take at this which is now published; that so, if my grounds be discovered false, I may give over building on them; or (if it shall be thought fit) build on more securely, when it shall appear, that nothing material, and of moment, is or can be objected against them. This, I say, upon a supposition, that yourself will allow these reasons for satisfying and sufficient, and not

repent of the motion which yourself have made, of reducing the controversy between us to this short issue. But in case your mind be altered, upon the least intimation you shall give me, that you do but desire to have it out, your desire shall prevail with me above all other reasons, and you shall not fail to receive it with all convenient speed.

Only, that my answer may be complete, and that I may have all my work together, and not be troubled myself, nor enforced to trouble you, with after-reckonings, I would first intreat you to make good your promise, of not omitting to answer all the particles of Dr. Potter's book, which may any way import, and now, at least, to take notice of some (as it seems to me) not inconsiderable passages of it, which between your first and second part, as it were between two stools, have been suffered hitherto to fall to the ground, and not been vouchsafed any answer at all.

For after this neglectful fashion you have passed by in silence, first, his discourse, wherein he proves briefly, but very effectually—that protestants may be saved, and that the Roman church, especially the Jesuits, are very uncharitable. S. 1. p. 6—9. Secondly, The authorities, whereby he justifies—that the ancient fathers, by the Roman, understood always a particular, and never the catholic, church; to which purpose he allegeth the words of Ignatius, Ambrose, Innocentius, Celestine, Nicolaus. S. 1. p. 10. Whereunto you say nothing, neither do you infringe his observation with any one instance to the contrary.

Thirdly, The greatest and most substantial part of his answers to the arguments of Charity Mistaken, built upon Deut. xvii. Numb. xvi. Matt.

xxviii. 20; xviii. 17. and in particular many pregnant and convincing texts of Scripture, quoted in the margin of his book. p. 25. to prove, that the judges of the synagogue (whose infallibility yet you make an argument of yours, and therefore must be more credible than yours) are vainly pretended to have been infallible; but as they were obliged to judge according to law, so were obnoxious to deviations from it. S. 2. p. 23—27.

Fourthly, His discourse, wherein he shews the difference between the prayers for the dead, used by the ancients, and those now in use in the Roman church.

Fifthly, The authority of three ancient, and above twenty modern, doctors of your own church, alleged by him to shew, that in their opinion even pagans, and therefore much more erring Christians, (if their lives were morally honest) by God's extraordinary mercy, and Christ's merit, may be saved. S. 2. p. 45.

Sixthly, A great part of his discourse, whereby he declares, that actual and external communion with the church is not of absolute necessity to salvation; nay, that those might be saved, whom the church utterly refused to admit to her communion. S. 2. p. 46—49.

Seventhly, His discourse concerning the church's latitude, which hath in it a clear determination of the main controversy against you: for therein he proves plainly, that all appertain to the church, who believe, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and Saviour of the world, with submission to his doctrine in mind and will: which he irrefragably demonstrates by many evi-

dent texts of Scripture, containing the substance of his assertion even in terms. S. 4. p. 114—117.

Eighthly, That wherein he shews, by many pertinent examples, that gross error and true faith may be lodged together in the same mind. And that men are not chargeable with the damnable consequences of their own erroneous opinions. S. 4. p. 112.

Ninthly, A very great part of his chapter, touching the dissensions of the Roman church, which he shews (against the pretences of Charity Mistaken) to be no less than ours, for the importance of the matter, and the pursuit of them to be exceedingly uncharitable. S. 6. p. 188—191. 193—197.

Tenthly, His clear refutation, and just representation, of the doctrine of implicit faith, as it is delivered by the doctors of your church; which he proves very consonant to the doctrine of heretics and infidels, but evidently repugnant to the word of God, *ibid.* p. 202—205.

Lastly, His discourse, wherein he shews—that it is unlawful for the church of after-ages to add any thing to the faith of the apostles; and many of his arguments, whereby he proves, that in the judgment of the ancient church the Apostles' Creed was esteemed a sufficient summary of the necessary points of simple belief; and a great number of great authorities, to justify the doctrine of the church of England, touching the canon of Scripture, especially the Old Testament. S. 7. p. 221. 223. 228, 229.

All these parts of Dr. Potter's book, for reasons best known to yourself, you have dealt with, as the priest and Levite in the gospel did with the

wounded Samaritan; that is, only looked upon them, and passed by: but now, at least, when you are admonished of it, that my reply to your second part (if you desire it) may be perfect, I would intreat you to take them into your consideration, and to make some shew of saying something to them, lest otherwise the world should interpret your obstinate silence a plain confession, that you can say nothing.

THE

APOSTOLICAL

INSTITUTION OF EPISCOPACY

DEMONSTRATED.

Sect. 1. If we abstract from episcopal government all accidentals, and consider only what is essential and necessary to it, we shall find in it no more but this; an appointment of one man of eminent sanctity and sufficiency to have the care of all the churches, within a certain precinct or diocess, and furnishing him with authority, (not absolute or arbitrary, but regulated and bounded by laws, and moderated by joining to him a convenient number of assistants) to the intent, that all the churches under him may be provided of good and able pastors: and that both of pastors and people, conformity to laws, and performance of their duties, may be required, under penalties not left to discretion, but by law appointed.

Sect. 2. To this kind of government, I am not, by any particular interest, so devoted, as to think it ought to be maintained, either in opposition to apostolic institution, or to the much-desired reformation of men's lives, and restoration of primitive discipline, or to any law or precept of our Lord

nere Pastorali, purposely written in defence of the presbyterial government, acknowledgeth, that presently after the apostles' times, or even in their time, (as ecclesiastical story witnesseth) it was ordained, that in every city one of the presbytery should be called a bishop, who should have preeminence over his colleagues, to avoid confusion, which ofttimes ariseth out of equality. And truly this form of government all churches every where received.

Sect. 5. Theodorus Beza, in his tract, *De triplici Episcopatus genere*, confesseth in effect the same thing. For, having distinguished episcopacy into three kinds, Divine, human, and Satanical, and attributing to the second (which he calls human, but we maintain and conceive to be apostolical) not only a priority of order, but a superiority of power and authority over other presbyters, bounded yet by laws and canons provided against tyranny; he clearly professeth, that of this kind of episcopacy is to be understood whatsoever we read concerning the authority of bishops, (or presidents, as Justin Martyr calls them) in Ignatius, and other more ancient writers.

Sect. 6. Certainly, from * these two great defenders of the presbytery, we should never have had this free acknowledgment, (so prejudicial to their own pretence, and so advantageous to their

* To whom two others also from Geneva may be added: Daniel Chamierus (in Panstratia, tom. ii. lib. x. cap. vi. sect. 24.) and Nicol. Videlius, (Exercitat. 3. in Epist. Ignatii ad Philadelph. cap. 14. et Exercit. 8. in Epist. ad Mariam, cap. iii.) which is also fully demonstrated in Dr. Hammond's Dissertations against Blondel, (which never were answered, and never will) by the testimonies of those who wrote in the very next ages after the apostles.

adversaries' purpose) had not the evidence of clear and undeniable truth enforced them to it. It will not therefore be necessary to spend any time in confuting that uningenuous assertion of the anonymous author of the catalogue of testimonies, for the equality of bishops and presbyters, who affirms, That their disparity began long after the apostles' times: but we may safely take for granted, that which these two learned adversaries have confessed, and see, whether upon this foundation laid by them, we may not by unanswerable reason raise this superstructure:

That seeing episcopal government is confessedly so ancient, and so catholic, it cannot with reason be denied to be apostolic.

Sect. 7. For so great a change, as between presbyterial government and episcopal, could not possibly have prevailed all the world over in a little time. Had episcopal government been an abberration from (or a corruption of) the government left in the churches by the apostles, it had been very strange, that it should have been received in any one church so suddenly, or that it should have prevailed in all for many ages after. *Variasse debuerat error ecclesiarum: quod autem apud omnes unum est, non est erratum, sed traditum.* "Had the churches erred, they would have varied: what therefore is one and the same amongst all, came not surely by error, but tradition." Thus Tertullian argues very probably, from the consent of the churches of his time, not long after the apostles, and that in matter of opinion much more subject to unobserved alteration. But that in the frame and substance of the necessary government of the church, a thing always in use and

practice, there should be so sudden a change, as presently after the apostles' times; and so universal, as received in all the churches: this is clearly impossible.

Sect. 8. For, what universal cause can be assigned or feigned of this universal apostacy? You will not imagine, that the apostles, all or any of them, made any decree for this change when they were living; or left order for it in any will or testament when they were dying. This were to grant the question; to wit—That the apostles, being to leave the government of the churches themselves, and either seeing by experience, or, foreseeing by the Spirit of God, the distractions and disorders which would arise from a multitude of equals, substituted episcopal government instead of their own. General councils, to make a law for a general change, for many ages there was none. There was no Christian emperor, no coercive power, over the church to enforce it. Or, if there had been any, we know no force was equal to the courage of the Christians of those times. Their lives were then at command (for they had not then learnt to fight for Christ), but their obedience to any thing against his law was not to be commanded (for they had perfectly learnt to die for him). Therefore, there was no power then to command this change; or, if there had been any, it had been in vain.

Sect. 9. What device then shall we study, or to what fountain shall we reduce this strange pretended alteration? Can it enter into our hearts to think, that all the presbyters and other Christians then, being the apostles' scholars, could be generally ignorant of the will of Christ, touching the

necessity of a presbyterial government? Or, dare we adventure to think them so strangely wicked all the world over, as against knowledge and conscience to conspire against it? Imagine the spirit of Diotrephes had entered into some, or a great many of the presbyters, and possessed them with an ambitious desire of a forbidden superiority, was it possible they should attempt and achieve it once without any opposition or contradiction? And, besides, that the contagion of this ambition should spread itself, and prevail without stop or control; nay, without any noise or notice taken of it, through all the churches in the world; all the watchmen in the mean time being so fast asleep, and all the dogs so dumb, that not so much as one should open his mouth against it?

Sect. 10. But let us suppose (though it be a horrible untruth) that the presbyters and people then were not so good Christians as the presbyterians are now; that they were generally so negligent to retain the government of Christ's church commanded by Christ, which we are now so zealous to restore; yet certainly we must not forget nor deny, that they were men as we are. And if we look upon them as mere natural men, yet, knowing by experience, how hard a thing it is, even for policy armed with power, by many attempts and contrivances, and in a long time, to gain upon the liberty of any one people; undoubtedly we shall never entertain so wild an imagination, as that, among all the Christian presbyters in the world, neither conscience of duty, nor love of liberty, nor averseness from pride, and usurpation of others over them, should prevail so much with any one, as to oppose this pretended universal inva-

sion of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and the liberty of Christians.

Sect. 11. When I shall see therefore all the fables in the Metamorphosis acted, and prove true stories; when I shall see all the democracies and aristocracies in the world lie down and sleep, and awake into monarchies; then will I begin to believe, that presbyterial government, having continued in the church during the apostles' times, should presently after (against the apostles' doctrine, and the will of Christ) be whirled about like a scene in a mask, and transformed into episcopacy. In the mean time, while these things remain thus incredible, and in human reason impossible, I hope I shall have leave to conclude thus:

Episcopal government is acknowledged to have been universally received in the church, presently after the apostles' times.

Between the apostles' times and this presently after, there was not time enough for, nor possibility of, so great an alteration.

And therefore, there was no such alteration as is pretended. And therefore episcopacy, being confessed to be so ancient and catholic, must be granted also to be apostolic: *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

REASONS AGAINST POPERY,

In a letter from Mr. William Chillingworth to his friend Mr. Lewgar, persuading him to return to his mother, the church of England, from the corrupt church of Rome.

Good Mr. Lewgar,

THOUGH I am resolved not to be much afflicted at that which is not in my power to help, yet I cannot deny, but the loss of a friend goes very near to my heart; and by this name of a friend, I did presume, till of late, that I might have called you; because, though perhaps for want of power and opportunity I have done you no good office, yet I have always been willing and ready to do you the best service I could; and therefore, I cannot but admire at your affected strangeness, which in your last letter to me you seem to take upon you; renouncing in a manner all relation to me, and tacitly excommunicating me from all interest in you. The superscription of your letter is to Mr. William Chillingworth, and the subscription John Lewgar, as if you either disdained, or made a conscience of styling me your friend, or yourself mine. If this proceed from passion and weakness, pray mend it; if from reason pray shew it: if you think me one of those, to whom St. John forbids you to say, God save you, then you are to think and prove me one of those deceivers, which deny Christ Jesus to be come in the flesh.

If you think me an heretic, and therefore to be avoided, you must prove me to be αὐτοκατάκριτον, condemned by mine own judgment, which I know I am not, and therefore think you cannot. If you say I do not hear the church, and therefore am to be esteemed an heathen or publican, you are to prove then, that by the church is meant the church of Rome; and yet, when you have done so, I hope Christians are not forbidden to shew humanity and civility even to pagans.

For God's sake, Mr. Lewgar, free yourself from this blind zeal, at least for a little space, and consider with reason and moderation, what strange crime you can charge me with, that should deserve this strange usage, especially from you. Is it a crime with all my understanding to endeavour to find your religion true, and to make myself a believer of it, and not to be able to do so? Is it a crime to employ all my reason upon the justification of the infallibility of the Roman church; and to find it impossible to be justified? I will call God to witness, who knows my heart better than you do, that I have evened the scale of my judgment as much as possibly I could, and have not willingly allowed one grain of worldly motives on either side, but have weighed the reasons for your religion, and against it, with such indifference, as if there were nothing in the world but God and myself; and is it my fault, that the scale goes down, which hath the most weight in it? That the building falls that hath a false foundation? Have you such power over your own understanding, that you can believe what you please, though you see no reason? Or that you can suspend your belief, when you see reason? If you have, I pray

for old friendship's sake teach me this trick; and, until I have learned it, I pray blame me not for going the ordinary way, I mean for believing, or not believing, as I see reason. If you can convince me of wilful opposition against the known truth, of negligence in seeking it, of unwillingness to find it, of preferring temporal respects before it, or of any other fault which is in my power to amend, that is indeed a fault, if I mend it not; be as angry with me as you please: but to impute to me involuntary errors, or that I do not see that which I would see, but cannot; or that I will not profess that which I do not believe; certainly this is a far more unreasonable error, than any you can justly charge me with; for, let me tell you, the imputing Socinianism to me (whosoever was the author of it) was a wicked and groundless slander. Perhaps you will say, (for this is the usual song of that side) pride is a voluntary fault, and with this I am justly chargeable, for forsaking the guide that God hath appointed me to follow; but what, if I forsook it, because I thought I had reason to fear it was one of those blind guides, which whosoever blindly follows, is threatened by our Saviour, that both he and his guide shall fall into the ditch? Then I hope you will grant it was not pride, but conscience, that moved me to do so; for as it is wise humility to obey those, whom God hath set over me, so it is sinful credulity to follow every man, or every church, that without warrant will take upon them to guide me: shew then some good and evident title which your church of Rome hath to this office; produce but one reason for it, which upon trial will not finally be resolved and vanished into uncertainty; and if

I yield not unto it, say, if you please, I am as proud as Lucifer.

In the mean time, give me leave to think it strange, and not far from a prodigy, that this doctrine of the Roman church's being the guide of faith, (if it be true doctrine) should either not be known to the evangelists, or if it were known to them, yet being wise and good men, they should either be so envious of the church's happiness, or so forgetful of the work they took in hand, which was to write the whole gospel of Christ, as that not so much as one of them should mention so much as once this so necessary part of the gospel, without the belief whereof there is no salvation, and with the belief whereof, unless men be snatched away by sudden death, there is hardly any damnation. It is evident, they do all of them with one consent speak very plainly of many things of no importance in comparison hereof; and, is it credible, or indeed possible, that with one consent, or rather conspiracy, they should be so deeply silent concerning this *unum necessarium?* You may believe it, if you can; for my part, I cannot, unless I see demonstration of it: and if you say they send us to the church, and consequently to the church of Rome, this is to suppose that which can never be proved, that the church of Rome is the only church; and without this supposal upon the division of the church, I am as far to seek for a guide of my faith as ever.

As, for example: in that great division of the church, when the whole world wondered, said St. Jerome, that it was become Arian, when Liberius, pope of Rome (as St. Athanasius, St. Jerome, and St. Hilary testify) subscribed their heresy, and

joined in communion with them; or in the division betwixt the Greek and Roman church, about the procession of the Holy Ghost, when either side was the church to itself, and each part schismatical and heretical to the other; what direction could I then, an ignorant man, have found from the text of Scripture, "Unless he hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen, or a publican: upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Again; give me leave to wonder, that neither St. Paul writing to the Romans, should so much as intimate this their privilege of infallibility, but rather, on the contrary, put them in fear, in the 11th chapter, that they, as well as the Jews, were in danger of falling away.

That St. Peter, the pretended bishop of Rome, writing two catholic epistles, mentioning his departure, should not once acquaint the Christians, whom he writes to, what guide they were to follow after he was taken from them!

That the writers of the New Testament, should so frequently warn men of heretics, false Christs, false prophets, and not once arm them against them, with letting them know this only sure means of avoiding their danger!

That so great a part of the New Testament should be employed about antichrist, and so little, and indeed none at all, about the vicar of Christ, and the guide of the faithful!

That our Saviour should leave this only means for the ending of controversies, and yet speak so obscurely and ambiguously of it, that now our judge is the greatest controversy, and the greatest hindrance of ending of them!

That there should be better evidence in the Scripture to justify the king to this office, who disclaims it, than the pope, who pretends to it!

That St. Peter should never exercise over the apostles any one act of jurisdiction, nor they ever give him any one title of authority over them!

That if the apostles did know, that St. Peter was made head of them, when our Saviour said, "Thou art Peter," they should still contend who shall be the first, and that our Saviour should never tell them, that St. Peter was the man!

That St. Paul should say, he was nothing inferior to the very chief apostles!

That the Catechumeni in the primitive church should never be taught this foundation of their faith, that the church of Rome was the guide of their faith!

That the fathers, Tertullian, St. Jerome, and Optatus, when they flew highest in recommendation of the Roman church, should attribute no more unto her than to all apostolical churches!

That in the controversy about Easter, the bishops and churches of Asia should be so ill catechized, as not to know this principle of Christian religion, the necessity of conformity of doctrine with the church of Rome!

That they should never be pressed with any such conformity in all things, only with the particular tradition of the western churches in that point!

That Irenæus, and many other bishops, notwithstanding, *Ad hancce ecclesiam necesse est omnem convenire ecclesiam*, should not yet think, that a necessary doctrine, nor a sufficient ground of excommunication, which the church of Rome thought to be so!

That St. Cyprian, and the bishops of Afric, should be so ill instructed in their faith, as not to know this foundation of it!

That they likewise were never urged with any such necessity of conformity with the church of Rome, nor ever charged with heresy or error for denying of it!

That when Liberius joined in communion with the Arians, and subscribed their heresy, the Arians then should not be the church, and the guide of the faith!

That never any heretics, for five ages after Christ, were pressed with this argument of the infallibility of the present church of Rome, or charged with the denial of it as a distinct heresy; so that Æneas Sylvius should have cause to say, *Ante tempora Concilii Niceni quisque sibi vivebat, et parvus respectus habebatur ad ecclesiam Romanam!*

That the ecclesiastical story of these times, mentions no act of authority of the church of Rome over other churches; as if there should be a monarchy, and the king for some ages together should exercise no act of jurisdiction in it!

That to supply this defect, the decretal epistles should be so impudently forged, which in a manner speak nothing else but *reges et monarchas*, I mean, the pope's making laws to exercise authority over all other churches!

That the African churches in St. Augustine's time should be so ignorant, that the pope was the head of the church, and judge of appeals, *Jure Divino*, and that there was a necessity of conformity with the church in this and all other points of doctrine!

Nay, that the popes themselves should be so

ignorant of the ground of this their authority, as to pretend to it, not upon Scripture, or universal tradition; but upon an imaginary pretended non-such canon of the council of Nice!

That Vincentius Lirinensis, seeking for a guide of his faith, and a preservation from heresy, should be ignorant of this so ready an one, the infallibility of the church of Rome!

All these things, and many more, are very strange to me, if the infallibility of the Roman church be indeed, and were always, by Christians acknowledged, the foundation of our faith; and, therefore, I beseech you, pardon me, if I chose mine upon one that is much firmer and safer, and lies open to none of these objections, which is Scripture and universal tradition.

And if one, that is of this faith, may have leave so to do, I will subscribe with hand and heart,

Your very loving and true friend,

W. CHILLINGWORTH.

END OF VOL. II.

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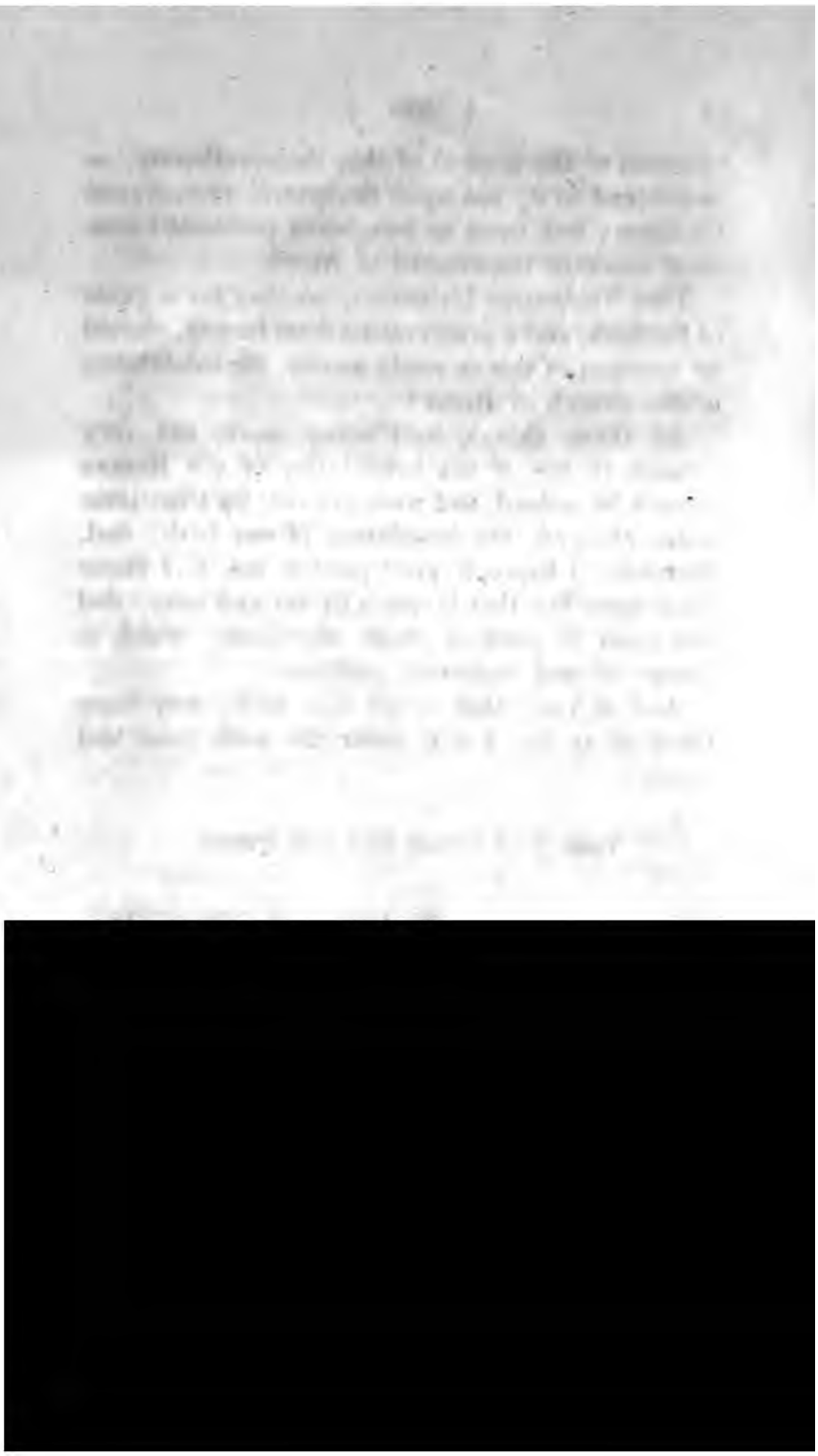

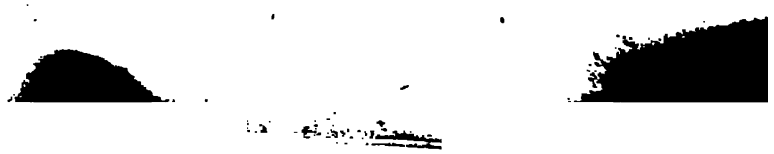

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